

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)

**Guidance for the implementation of LEADER
Cooperation activities in the Rural Development
Programme for Northern Ireland 2014-2020**



1. Rationale for Cooperation Projects

A Cooperation project is one which takes place as a joint action between two or more LAGs and which provides mutual benefit for each partner. Cooperation of a LAG area with other geographical areas is a key component of the LEADER local development strategy (LDS). It must fit with the strategies of all LAGs involved, not merely the Lead partner.

During the 2014-2020 period, EAFRD will support transnational and inter-territorial cooperation projects carried out by LAGs as part of the implementation of local development strategies selected under LEADER. Participation in cooperation activity is a mandatory element of LEADER in the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP).

Within the NIRDP, there is a specific strand focusing on Cooperation between LAGs in Northern Ireland and those in Ireland. This is known as the **All-Island LEADER Cooperation Scheme**. Each NI LAG is expected to participate in a minimum of two full Cooperation projects delivered under this Scheme. These projects may also involve LAGs from other Member States but as a minimum must involve at least one LAG from NI and one LAG from Ireland. It is expected that 7% of the LAG's total budget for projects should be committed against Cooperation activity. A total of £4 million has been ring-fenced for Cooperation projects across the 10 Northern Ireland LAGs.

LAGs are also encouraged to participate in Inter-territorial and Transnational full Cooperation projects that do not involve Irish LAGs. These will be financed from the LAG's overall Priority 6 allocation and not through the All-Island LEADER Cooperation Scheme.

2. Legal Basis

From *Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013* on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD):

Article 44 'LEADER cooperation activities'

(1) The support referred to in *Article 35(1) (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013*, being the preparation and implementation of cooperation activities of the LAG, shall be granted to:

(a) cooperation projects within a Member State (inter-territorial cooperation) or cooperation projects between territories in several Member States or with territories in third countries (transnational cooperation),

(b) preparatory technical support for inter-territorial and transnational cooperation projects, on condition that local action groups are able to demonstrate that they are envisaging the implementation of a concrete project.

(2) Apart from other Local Action Groups, the partners of a Local Action Group under the EAFRD may be:

(a) a group of local public and private partners in a rural territory that is implementing a local development strategy within or outside the Union,

(b) a group of local public and private partners in a non-rural territory that is implementing a local development strategy.

(3) In cases where cooperation projects are not selected by the local action groups, Member States shall establish a system of ongoing application.

They shall make public the national or regional administrative procedures concerning the selection of transnational cooperation projects and a list of eligible costs at the latest two years after the date of the approval of their rural development programmes.

Approval of cooperation projects by the competent authority shall take place no later than four months after the date of submission of the project.

(4) Member States shall communicate to the Commission the approved transnational cooperation projects.

Article 52 'European network for rural development'

(3) The tasks of the network shall be to:

(g) support the national networks and transnational cooperation initiatives and the exchange concerning actions and experience in the field of rural development with networks in third countries;

(h) specifically for Local Action Groups:

(ii) cooperate with the networking and technical support bodies for local development set up by the ERDF, the ESF and the EMFF as regards their local development activities and transnational cooperation.

Article 54 'National rural network'

(3) EAFRD support under Art. 51 (3) shall be used:

(b) for the preparation and implementation of an action plan containing at least the following:

(iii) activities regarding the provision of training and networking for local action groups and in particular technical assistance for inter-territorial and transnational cooperation, facilitation of cooperation among local action groups and the search of partners for the measure referred to in Article 35.

The European Commission has developed guidance for the implementation of LEADER Cooperation activities for the 2014 to 2020 period. This reference document sets out the Commission's framework and key processes associated with the delivery of LEADER Cooperation actions. This guide may be downloaded from:

http://docs.enrd.eu/newsletter/20141119_LEADER_Cooperation-Guide-2014-20.pdf

3. Types of Support

The support and management of cooperation activities takes substantial time and resources for planning and management. It is therefore important that projects are implemented in conditions that recognise the gradual nature of cooperation. This approach can facilitate the involvement of other organisations who may be publicly-funded or statutory-sector or community-based organisations. LAGs are encouraged to consider engaging with organisations that may be able to assist in the development and implementation of Cooperation actions. In procedural terms, Cooperation can be considered to take place in three successive phases:

3.1. Phase One - Networking

A key element of the animation activity of the LAG is networking. This provides the opportunity to LAGs to identify and develop links with other LAGs and organisations. Networking is considered as the starting point for Cooperation activity. LAGs can complete a Partner Search Request Form (available from the [Rural Support Network website](#)) to share their project idea with other LAGs in the UK, Ireland and other Member States.

Costs incurred by LAGs involved in networking activity could include for example, travel and accommodation. These costs are payable from the LAG's Animation budget.

3.2. Phase Two - Preparatory technical support¹ (Pre-Development phase)

These actions precede the full Cooperation project and allow LAGs to investigate the merit and potential to develop concrete actions that could form a full project. A Pre-Development project could involve a feasibility study, market analysis and / or elaboration of the common issue towards a series of actions of mutual benefit to all of the LAG areas involved. This type of action by its nature will inform whether or not a joint action should proceed.

The support for preparatory technical support can **only be granted under the condition that a LAG can demonstrate that it is envisaging the implementation of a concrete project**. This means that it should at least identify the objectives and the character of a planned project. Receiving preparatory technical support does not imply an obligation to later on carry out such a project.

The costs eligible under preparatory technical support can include:

- costs related to exchange of experience (e.g. meetings with potential partners, travel, accommodation, and interpreter's fees);
- project pre-development cost (e.g. project feasibility study, consulting for specific issues, translation costs, additional staff costs).

Cost incurred by a NI LAG for an approved preparatory technical action may be reimbursed at a rate of 100% from EAFRD funds. There is a maximum grant ceiling of £5,000 per preparatory action per LAG.

¹ Art. 44 (1) (b) EAFRD Reg.

The costs associated with Preparatory Technical Support projects will be paid through the All-Island LEADER Cooperation Scheme.

There is no restriction on the number of preparatory projects that a LAG may engage in. Preparatory support cannot finance expenditure once a cooperation partnership has been finally established on the basis of an agreement, as it precedes the cooperation project.

Claims for Preparatory Technical Support will only be paid if accompanied by a satisfactory End of Project report.

3.3. Phase Three - the Cooperation project (Implementation of the concrete project)²

This phase involves the implementation of a concrete joint project with clearly defined deliverables producing benefits for all of the participating territories. The project is managed under a co-ordinating / Lead LAG. The practical cooperation may have complementary objectives such as:

- to identify complementarities; and
- to achieve the critical mass required for a project to be viable.

In all types of cooperation projects, partners must pre-define/agree the key criteria related to the activities to be selected and carried out. It is also important that the cooperation partners keep each other informed about progress with the project and any changes to its implementation, in order to allow for necessary adjustments that ensure the achievement of mutually agreed project objectives.

The total cost for NI LAGs implementing a Cooperation project will be funded at 75% maximum aid intensity. There is a maximum grant ceiling of £400,000 per Cooperation project per NI LAG. Funding is available for projects that are principally Capital in nature i.e. Resource expenditure should account for no more than 20% of total costs borne by the NI LAG. Relevant State Aid limitations must also be recognised.

While the total cost of the operation will not be funded at 100%, it is possible for individual actions within the operation to be funded at varying rates, possibly some at up to 100% e.g. indirect costs such as administrative support, travel, accommodation, salaries. The involvement of other organisations may help to lever in financial support in the form of cash and / or in-kind contributions. **LAG members' time-spend within a Cooperation action may also be counted as an eligible Voluntary Labour contribution.** Voluntary Labour may represent (i) up to 5% of the total cost for the relevant LAG or (ii) £20,000 equivalent maximum value, whichever is the lesser. The standard rules and rates for Voluntary Labour under Priority Six apply.

Aid intensities for individual activities within an operation must be agreed with the Managing Authority before the Letter of Offer is issued.

² Art. 44 (1) (a) EAFRD Reg.

There is no restriction on the number of Cooperation projects that a LAG may engage in. Each NI LAG is expected to participate in a minimum of two full Cooperation projects involving partner LAGs from Ireland and delivered under the **All-Island LEADER Cooperation Scheme**.

4. Eligibility Conditions – General Principles

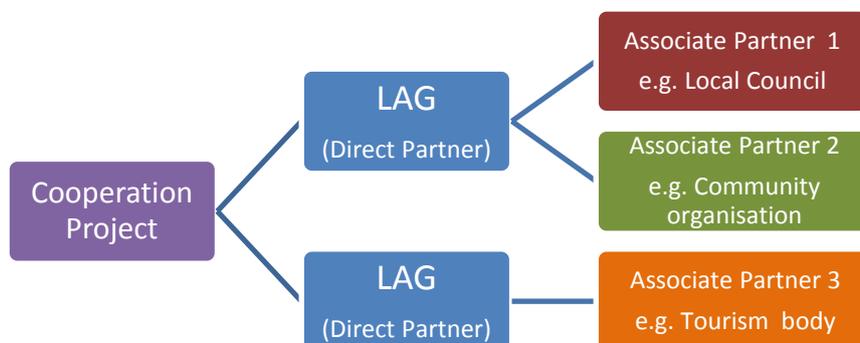
4.1. Geographical Scope

As listed in Article 44(2) of the EAFRD Regulation, the *direct partners* of a Local Action Group under the EAFRD may be:

- a group of local public and private partners in a rural territory that is implementing a local development strategy within or outside the Union,
- a group of local public and private partners in a non-rural territory that is implementing a local development strategy.

Only actions led by LAGs selected for support under LEADER for NIRDPA will be eligible for funding from EAFRD. The LAG will be the beneficiary of funding i.e. will be the recipient of the Letter of Offer. LAG-led Cooperation projects may involve *associate partners* who are publicly-funded or statutory-sector or community-based and operate within the relevant LAG's territory. The principles on the eligibility of operations depending on location laid down in the Common Provisions Regulation (1303/2013) have to be respected, especially as regards expenditure in countries outside the Union.

Example of potential relationship between Direct and Associate Partners



4.2. Primary Eligibility Criteria

The qualifying criteria for cooperation projects are as follows:

- The cooperation action must involve at least one LAG selected under LEADER of the NI Rural Development Programme;
- It must be implemented under the responsibility of a coordinating LAG;
- It must have clearly set out actions and outcomes with clear plans for dissemination of results;
- It must involve the implementation of a concrete, joint action.

A cooperation project partner of a LEADER LAG which is not another LAG has to be a "group of local public and private partners that is implementing a local development strategy". This means that the scope of action of this group has to be similar to that of a LAG, but does not have to comply with all the features stipulated in Art. 34, Common Provisions Regulation (CPR 1303/2013).

4.3. Selection Criteria

For Phase 2 applications, LAGs are advised to use the criteria set out in the *Preparatory Technical Support – LAG Assessment Template* at **Appendix 2**. The selection criteria as used for non-business measures of Priority Six will be used for Phase 3, full Cooperation project applications.

4.4. Scope of Eligible Actions

Eligible actions must relate to the approved LDS of the applicant LAG and fit within the scope of Priority Six of the NI Rural Development Programme. Funding from the NIRD for NI LAGs involved in full (Phase 3) Cooperation projects will be principally Capital in nature however broader Cooperation actions could:

- Help local industry by targeting new markets for their product(s),
- Improve the quality of products manufactured through cooperation on processing techniques,
- Include joint marketing and short supply chain activities,
- Introduce new approaches in areas such as Village Planning, building on the experience of LAGs in other areas,
- Provide economies of scale or critical mass to enable a project which would not have been possible within a single LAG area.

The operation of a small grants scheme as part of a Cooperation project is not eligible.

4.5. Eligibility of Common and Local Costs

Common costs are associated with cooperation coordination and activities incurred and jointly shared among partners. Local costs are incurred by a LAG for activities that directly relate to that LAGs activity on a cooperation project and the cost is not shared with other LAGs.

The table below lists examples of Common and Local Costs that may be eligible as part of Cooperation projects (subject to the specific eligibility conditions applicable to partner LAGs from other regions and Member States).

| Cost type | Eligible Cost | Additional Information |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Common Costs | Concepts, planning and certification expenses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparatory activity: expenses relating to conception and development of the project; general expenses relating to the organisation and coordination of planning and pre-development activities |
| | Interpretation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparatory and Cooperation activity: partner search |
| | Translation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparatory and Cooperation activity: partner search |
| | Surveys | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development, elaboration & implementation |
| | Studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility studies, research, specific consultancies and associated activities |
| | External consultants, additional staff, coaching | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice exchange, including the recourse (labour contracts) to third parties for research, evaluation and the transfer of experience |
| | Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training/dissemination among members of participating LAGs • Training module development and introductory/pilot training of beneficiaries |
| | Project information & communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public relations - promotional material (flyer, leaflets, guides, websites), events, other • Investments in equipment for communication |
| | Managing the TNC project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenses of the lead partner LAG for coordination activities, monitoring and evaluation of the project, if and as agreed by partners |
| Running a common structure / network | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenses relating to the constitution and running of a common structure | |
| Local Costs | Construction costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs associated with the building / creation of a tangible, fixed asset |
| | Overhead costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office rent (hire of premises) • Administration and secretarial activities, utilities / services, other |
| | Office equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of telephone and computer services |
| | Travel & accommodation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International & local travel expenses • Possibility of exception: excursions/meetings of project partners: joint travel activities during the meeting |

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Seminars, Workshops | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room rental for joint meetings (note: if meetings are related to coordination, these can be considered common costs; cf. above sub-section 'managing the TNC project') • Preparatory activity: partner search – study visits and associated activities |
| Organising meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of partner meetings including travel costs (note: if meetings are related to coordination, these can be considered common costs; cf. above sub-section 'managing the TNC project'), board and accommodation, local transport, mission allowance, hire of premises and equipment • Possibility of exception: common costs c.f. 'Managing the TNC project' • Preparatory activity: partner search – including the hire of premises, equipment, catering |

LAGs sharing common costs may opt to develop an agreement with supplier(s) for costs incurred to be invoiced separately and proportionately to each of the relevant LAGs involved in a funded activity. Alternatively, a single invoice may be forwarded to one LAG who will take responsibility for payment and subsequent invoicing of partner LAGs to recoup their respective contributions.

5. Cooperation Agreement

- 5.1. Experience of Cooperation projects shows that for effective project management it is important at the outset, to clarify:
- The goals to be achieved;
 - The roles and responsibilities (for management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation); and
 - The financial contributions of each partner.
- 5.2. As a formal Cooperation Agreement reduces the possibility of disputes and provides for clarity of understanding and transparent management, all groups engaging in (full scale) Cooperation projects are required to enter into a legally binding, written Cooperation Agreement with all partners before commencement of the project. A generic template for the Cooperation Agreement will be provided by the Managing Authority. The Agreement itself contains the general contract terms only and should be adapted by LAGs to reflect their individual needs and the nature of the joint action.
- 5.3. A formal, written Agreement is not required for Pre-Development activities however LAGs may, if they wish, develop a Memorandum of Understanding (or similar) to record the role of involved partners, the common objectives of the Pre-Development activity and how costs will be shared and paid. The creation of such a Memorandum of Understanding is not a mandatory requirement of the NIRD P.

5.4. The Cooperation Agreement for full projects must be signed by all the partners and must set out:

- the project goals (inputs, outputs and impacts);
- the actions that will be implemented to attain them;
- the role of each partner in carrying out the project;
- the financial participation of each partner in the project; and
- all components of the whole budget for the joint initiative.

5.5. As a minimum the Cooperation Agreement must contain:

- a written undertaking by the partners with the names and addresses of the Lead Local Action Group and of the direct partner LAGs/local groups and associate partners involved;
- a detailed description of the Cooperation project indicating:
 - how the need / demand for the project was identified;
 - the project goals;
 - the activities that will be taken to achieve them;
 - the role of each partner in organising and implementing the project;
 - the arrangements for organising, monitoring and evaluating the project;
 - the expected results of the project;
 - an overall planned budget and the financial participation of each partner;
 - a timetabled project implementation and management plan;
 - the applicable law and the competent courts in the event of a dispute between the parties;
 - If the partners so wish, a clause permitting new LAGs/groups to be included; and
 - a procedure permitting the agreement to be amended.

6. Application Process

For LEADER Cooperation projects, the LAG will be the applicant organisation and therefore to ensure transparency in assessment and avoid potential conflict of interest, it is important that the signatory to the application is not involved in the internal assessment processes. In this respect a sub-group within the LAG should be specifically set up to identify cooperation opportunities, make applications and carry forward the project. As with all other applications for funding under the NIRD, an application must be made on-line through Database 2014. LAG members must not engage in the assessment of any project for which they are part of the application sub-group.

Where a number of LAGs intend to work together on a Pre-Development project, each partner LAG is responsible for submitting an application for their element of the joint project.

6.1. Phase 2 - Preparatory Technical Support (Pre-Development projects)

If the LAG has completed sufficient networking activity and baseline scoping to merit progression from Phase 1 to Phase 2, the LAG can request Preparatory Technical Support. A key step is the completion of a *Preparatory Technical Support – Information Template* (**Appendix 1**). This template requires the LAG to clearly set out the rationale for the cooperation Pre-Development project. This template does not represent a formal application for grant support. It is to be used to provide information to the Managing Authority and National Rural Network Support Unit. It can also be used to share information with other LAGs and Network Support Units about potential Cooperation projects.

LAGs are recommended to discuss their proposal with the DAERA Cooperation Coordinator **before** sending a completed Information Template to DAERA for consideration. This way, the overall objective of the Pre-Development activity can be reviewed with DAERA before the LAG develops a formal application.

Following receipt of a completed Information Template from a LAG, the Managing Authority will consider the eligibility of the proposed activity. The Managing Authority will return the Template to the LAG with comments. The Managing Authority may decide to ratify the proposal or recommend that further work is required by the LAG ahead of a formal application. **DAERA will inform the LAG of its decision no later than 15 working days after receipt of an Information Template.**

If the proposal is ratified by the Managing Authority, the LAG can then proceed with a formal application via Database 2014. The application must be assessed by the LAG and the LAG is advised to use the Criteria set out in the *Preparatory Technical Support – LAG Assessment Template* at **Appendix 2**. There is no requirement to complete an Economic Appraisal at this phase of the Cooperation process.

If the application is approved, the LAG should record the decision in the relevant Information Template and return a copy to the Managing Authority. A Letter of Offer can now be issued. The LAG will wish to ensure that other partner LAGs have been awarded their element of the funding before starting the Preparatory Technical Support project.

6.2. Phase 3 - Cooperation project (Implementation of the concrete project)

For Cooperation projects, full application and assessment procedures must be followed in line with the processes established for Priority 6 (LEADER), including completion of an Economic Appraisal.

Note that that the Economic Appraisal should not be completed by the promoter but should be undertaken independently. The EA can be undertaken either by procurement of a consultant or via the services of an independent officer from within the LAG area or from another NI LAG area. In cases where more than one NI LAG is involved in a Cooperation proposal, a single Economic Appraisal can be commissioned on a shared basis however the EA must appropriately reference the needs, costs, benefits and impacts of each participating NI LAG.

In the case of a transnational application involving a NI LAG, a single Economic Appraisal setting out the case for all of the LAG partners may be acceptable on condition that (i) the appraisal has been undertaken by an organisation independent of the applicant LAGs and (ii) the structure of the appraisal conforms to the Northern Ireland Guide for Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (NIGEAE)³.

In addition, the LAG must prepare and submit a 'Cooperation Agreement'. The requirement to provide a Cooperation Agreement replaces the Business / Project Plan that is required for all other Priority Six (LEADER) applications.

If the LAG is content for the Cooperation project to proceed, the Cooperation Agreement and Economic Appraisal must be forwarded to the DAERA Cooperation Coordinator. The Cooperation Agreement and EA will be considered by the RDP Principal Officer responsible for the Cooperation measure. The Cooperation project must not commence until the Managing Authority has given formal approval.

Only appropriately authorised Cooperation Agreements will be accepted for consideration.

DAERA will inform the LAG of its decision no later than 4 months after receipt of both the signed, original Cooperation Agreement and Economic Appraisal.

6.3. All DAERA approvals for Pre-Development and Cooperation projects will be made conditional upon the other parties also gaining approval from their Managing Authorities / Funders and will be valid for 9 months.

6.4. DAERA will inform the European Commission of all approved transnational Cooperation projects.

6.5. The Review Process as established for Priority Six (LEADER) must be followed, if a request for a formal review is submitted.

³ <http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/eag>

7. Advances

Advances are not available for Cooperation projects. Local Authorities, who are providing the Administration Support for LAGs, are also expected to be the lead financial actor on behalf of the LAG.

8. Letter of Offer

8.1. If the LAG approves funding for Phase 2 (Preparatory Technical Support) and / or Phase 3 (Full Cooperation) projects, the relevant Letter of Offer must be issued to the applicant LAG. The Letter of Offer and associated processes as established for Priority Six (LEADER) must be used.

8.2. LAGs must provide the Managing Authority with a detailed Implementation Plan within 12 weeks of receipt of their formal offer of funding for a Full Cooperation project.

9. Evaluation

Following the completion of a full Cooperation project, a Post Project Evaluation (PPE) must be completed within a timeframe acceptable to the Managing Authorities of the relevant LAGs. A single PPE evaluating the local and shared impacts of the project within and across the partner LAG areas can be completed. The PPE should be commensurate with the original Economic Appraisal conducted for the project.

PREPARATORY TECHNICAL SUPPORT - INFORMATION TEMPLATE

N.B. This template is **not a formal application for grant support**, it is to be used to provide information to the Managing Authorities and National Rural Network Support Units of the applicant LAG and LAGs in other regions about potential Cooperation projects.

| Working Title of proposed project |
|-----------------------------------|
| |

| Contact Details for Local Action Group submitting this template | |
|---|--|
| Name of Local Action Group (LAG): | |
| Name of Chairperson: | |
| Name of main contact for this form: | |
| E-mail address: | |
| Telephone number: | |
| Postal address: | |

| Description of the Preparatory Technical Support project |
|---|
| <p>1. Brief description of the potential project for which Preparatory Technical Support is being sought. (around 250 words). This should include how the project links in with the priorities in your LDS and other relevant priorities and a timetable for the work.</p> |
| |

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|--|
| 2. Who has been identified as potential partner(s)* and what value do they add to the potential project? (*please identify by region/country) |
| |
| 3. What networking activity has already taken place with this/these potential partner(s) in association with this potential project? Attach evidence (e.g. copies of e-mails or minutes of meetings). Please summarise the outcomes and progress to date. |
| |
| 4. (i) What do you expect preparatory support to achieve and (ii) what are the desired outcomes for the Local Action Group area from the potential Co-operation project? |
| |
| 5. Explain why the proposed project is likely to be achievable if undertaken as a joint Cooperation action as opposed to a regular project? |
| |

| Partners | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Does the LAG see the opportunity to involve other partners? | YES | NO |

| Proposed Budget for Preparatory Technical Support project | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|---------|
| Anticipated Activities | Brief Description | Cost (indicate either £ or €) | | |
| | | Applicant LAG | Partner LAG(s) | Overall |
| Studies / Consultancy | | | | |
| Product Development | | | | |
| Travel / Subsistence | | | | |
| Meetings / Hospitality | | | | |
| Other <i>(please detail)</i> | | | | |
| Total Costs | | | | |

1.

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Noted / Ratified by Managing Authority | | |
| Comments: | | |
| | | |
| Name: | | |
| Signature: | | |
| Date: | | |

Comments made by the Managing Authority should be recorded in Table 1 and a signed copy of this form returned to the LAG.

If the proposal is ratified by the Managing Authority, the LAG can then proceed with a formal Application and subsequent assessment by the LAG Assessment Panel.

2.

| | | |
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| Local Action Group Decision | | |
| Recommended to proceed: | YES | NO |
| Comments: | | |
| | | |
| Name: (LAG Chair of Assessment Panel) | | |
| Signature: | | |
| Date: | | |

The Assessment Panel decision should be recorded in Table 2 and a copy of this form returned to the Managing Authority.

LEADER COOPERATION - PREPARATORY TECHNICAL SUPPORT – LAG ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

This template is designed for use by the LAG Assessment Panel when considering applications to fund LEADER Cooperation Preparatory Technical support (Phase 2) projects. The maximum grant available per project per LAG is £5,000.

| Application Reference No. | Working Title of proposed project |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | |

| CRITERION | Yes / No | Comments |
|--|----------|----------|
| 1 Does the proposed activity fit with the LAG's Cooperation priorities as per the LAG's Strategy? | | |
| 2 Has sufficient Networking activity and / or baseline scoping of the proposed activity taken place to merit its progression to a Pre-Development project? | | |
| 3 At this stage, does the proposed activity offer potential to deliver positive outcomes for the LAG area? | | |
| 4 Are the potential outcomes from the proposed activity unlikely to be delivered without a joint Cooperation action? | | |
| 5 Do the proposed actions and associated costs appear reasonable and represent value for money? | | |
| 6 Is it evident that the LAG envisages the implementation of a concrete project? | | |
| 7 Has the proposed action been formally ratified by the Managing Authority? | | |

All questions must be answered and in order for the application to be approved for funding, the answer to each question must be YES. Comments should be recorded alongside each Criterion to justify the decision.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| Date of Assessment Panel meeting: | | Application Reference No. | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------|--|

The (*LAG name here*) LAG Assessment Panel has considered this Application and decided that it should be: Accepted / Rejected / Deferred*

*(delete as appropriate)

The rationale for this decision must be recorded in the Assessment Panel minutes and all Assessment Panel members must sign below.

| Signature | Date | Signature | Date |
|----------------------------------|------|-----------|------|
| <i>Chair of Assessment Panel</i> | | | |
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