

Fáilte Ireland Support for NATIONAL SCHEMES

OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE FUND 2018

Fáilte Ireland has partnered with the Department of Rural and Community Development to provide funding of almost €11million for 78 projects across 24 counties – including Offaly – under Measure 2 of the 2018 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme.

The scheme is part of the Government's Action Plan for Rural Development and provides funding for new outdoor recreational infrastructure. It also supports the maintenance, enhancement and promotion of existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in Ireland. Fáilte

Ireland has invested a total of €3million into the scheme with the aim of enhancing existing tourism recreation infrastructure and ensuring that the economic benefits of tourism are spread regionally across the country.

RURAL REGENERATION & DEVELOPMENT FUND

Fáilte Ireland works closely with the Department of Rural and Community Development to deliver quality visitor experiences nationwide to ensure local communities can benefit from tourism growth, both economically and socially. Fáilte Ireland has partnered with its strategic partners – Coillte and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) – on two applications under the Department's Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF):

Coillte: International Mountain Biking Project

This flagship national project will develop international standard Mountain Biking Centres which will provide recreational, health and tourism benefits. The locations include the Slieve Bloom Mountains in Offaly and Laois. The overall project, which will be delivered by 2022, was awarded a total of €10.26m including over €950,000 from Fáilte Ireland.

NPWS: "Regenerating Rural Ireland by Transforming the Visitor Experience at Ireland's National Parks and Nature Reserves"

This is a flagship national project stemming from the recently published Tourism Interpretative Masterplan for Ireland's National Parks, which will enhance and significantly upgrade the visitor experience across Ireland's portfolio of National Parks and Nature Reserves in a number of locations including Offaly.

Fáilte Ireland Support for FESTIVALS

Fáilte Ireland has identified festivals as a key driver for tourism growth, particularly during off-season times. Investment in and business development support for festivals is helping to drive growth in the regions and entice both domestic and overseas visitors to different parts of the country in the off-peak season.

Fáilte Ireland also provides funding for local festivals through its 'Regional Festivals and Participative Events Programme', which has been managed by Local Authorities since 2018.

New Festival IDEAS

As well as the range of major national festivals Fáilte Ireland supports, the 'Festival Innovation Programme' was launched in 2018 to support unique and high tourism impact festivals and events which will stand out internationally. Festivals are encouraged to apply on our website: www.failteireland.ie/festivalsandevents



Your local Fáilte Ireland representatives in Offaly are:

Derek Dolan (Ireland's Ancient East), derek.dolan@failteireland.ie

Tony Dawson (Ireland's Hidden Heartlands), tony.dawson@failteireland.ie

Fáilte Ireland is the National Tourism Development Authority and is funded by the Government of Ireland through the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.

Upcoming Fáilte Ireland Initiatives FOR OFFALY

'TALES OF TWO WORLDS' VISITOR EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Fáilte Ireland has initiated a number of Visitor Experience Development Plans across the country. These are 3-5 year commercial development plans for a region, which bring the public and private sector together to drive visitors and revenue to lesser known areas and attractions, especially in the off-peak season. The themes of the Visitor Experience Development Plans have been designed to enhance each area's strongest tourism assets and appeal to core overseas markets. Vivality, these plans will be delivered in a way that encourages visitors to spend more time in an area, without compromising the environment or culture of the region.

The 'Tales of Two Worlds' Visitor Experience Development Plan brings together Ireland's historic houses and gardens, and the period in Ireland's history of famine and emigration. A number of Offaly businesses are now taking part in a bespoke 15-month Great Houses & Gardens Experience Development Programme as part of this, which focuses on the county's rich historic houses and gardens. The programme includes working with visitor attractions and frontline staff to improve storytelling, audience engagement, sales skills and revenue.

Christian and sacred sites such as Clonmacnoise, along with food and drink experiences like Tullamore DEW Distillery, will also play a key role in this Visitor Experience Development Plan.

SHANNON MASTERPLAN



Ireland's Hidden Heartlands

The River Shannon, its lakes and inland waterways are an integral part of the tourism offering in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. Fáilte Ireland has provided funding to Waterways Ireland to lead on the preparation of a Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon River, including the Shannon-erne Waterway. The Tourism Masterplan will assess the strengths and weaknesses of this key tourism asset in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, and

will bring forward proposals on how to grow a sustainable international tourism destination in the Shannon Corridor which respects the nature and diversity of the environment and its people. Offaly County Council is part of the steering group to help guide the process. This Tourism Masterplan is expected to be completed by the end of June 2019 and will include product development and investment recommendations.

BEARA BREIFNE WAY



Ireland's Hidden Heartlands

The Beara Breifne Way is Ireland's longest inland way-marked route, which spans Offaly, Tipperary, Galway, Roscommon, Leitrim and Cavan within Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. A Tourism Activation Plan has been commissioned by Fáilte Ireland, which will see a number of towns along the route identified as

walking hubs to drive visitors into nearby areas and maximise the tourism benefits increased tourist numbers will bring. Work on this Tourism Activation Plan is ongoing, with completion of the plan expected this summer. Local Authorities in these counties will be fully involved and will receive regular project updates.

WEB IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME



Ireland's Hidden Heartlands

Fáilte Ireland is launching a pilot Web Improvement Programme this summer for Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. This new programme will help successful applicants improve the quality of their website, the user experience and drive additional traffic to their website with the objective of increasing visitor

numbers from domestic and overseas markets. Funding will be available to successful applicants to implement the required improvements to their websites. Further information will be available on www.failteireland.ie

DESTINATION TOWNS – OPEN FOR APPLICATIONS

Through Fáilte Ireland's Destination Towns initiative, every Local Authority in the country – including Offaly County Council – will be able to bid for funding of between €250,000 - €500,000 to develop up to two towns in their area that have the potential to become a tourism hub.

The new scheme, which is now open for applications, will provide funding for the Local Authority to enhance public spaces and attract more overseas visitors. The Ireland's Ancient East and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands teams are working closely with the council on its funding submission. The closing date for applications is September 2019.

PLATFORMS FOR GROWTH INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Platforms for Growth is Fáilte Ireland's new four-year capital investment programme worth €150million. The programme specifically targets product themes and types known as 'platforms', which have the greatest potential to grow tourism in Ireland. The first of the platforms to be launched is Immersive Heritage and Cultural Attractions, which will focus on developing world-class attractions that appeal to overseas visitors who are looking for hands-on experiences.

The programme will fund projects of scale (greater than €2.5million) and falls under the Government's Project Ireland 2040 strategy which supports sustainable growth in the Irish tourism sector to drive higher revenue and job creation around Ireland. Platforms for Growth is now open for applications until 17th July 2019 and a series of workshops will be held around the country. Find out more: www.failteireland.ie/platformsforgrowth

Developing Tourism in OFFALY



Fáilte Ireland wants Offaly to benefit as much as possible from tourism across the county and has looked at the natural assets and the distinctive experiences they might offer in each area.

Offaly is an ideal fit for both the Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and the Ireland's Ancient East brands as many of its key historical assets, like Clonmacnoise, are in the vicinity of the River Shannon. Therefore, the Shannon bank in Offaly is a brand crossover area where tourism businesses and attractions can leverage the brand which works best for their business. The areas west of the N62 are part of the new Ireland's Hidden Heartlands brand and the east of the county, with its rich historical assets, is part of Ireland's Ancient East.

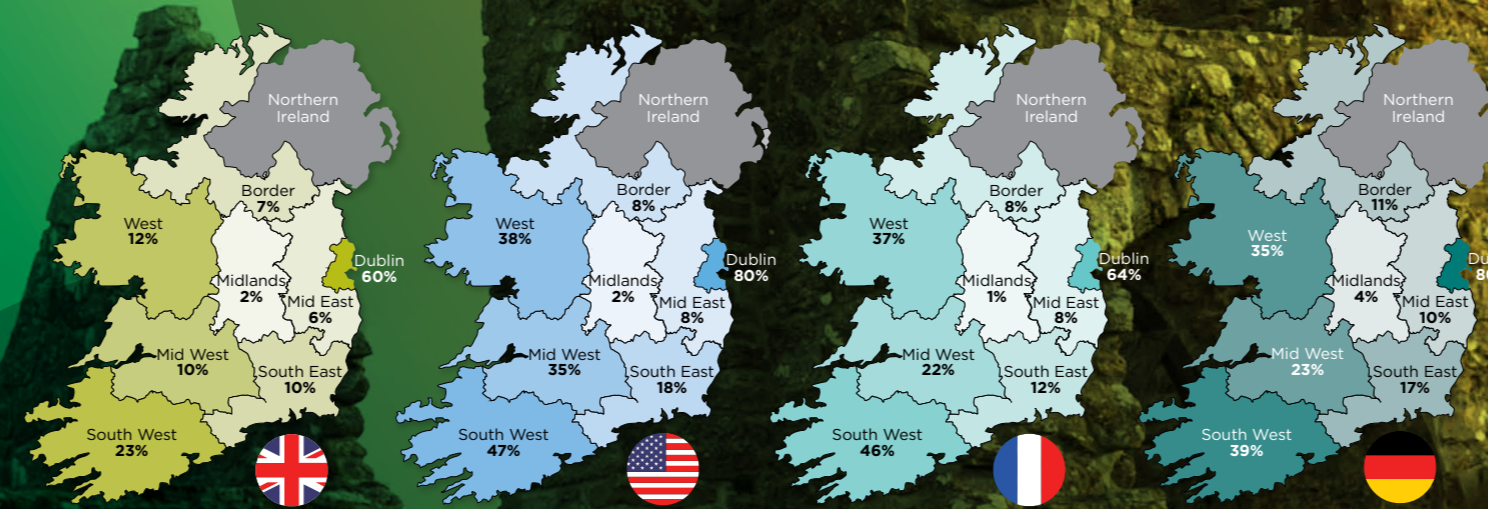
Tourism JOBS & REVENUE

Every
€1 million
of tourist expenditure
helps to support
27 tourism jobs

Tourism
generates
€1.8bn
in exchequer revenue – the
equivalent of
€1,000
per household

Tourism
supports
260,000
jobs
nationwide

Regions Visited By KEY OVERSEAS MARKETS



*Holidaymakers can visit more than one region, therefore the sum of regions adds up to more than 100%

Counties which make up regions: **DUBLIN**. MIDLANDS Longford, Westmeath, Offaly, Laois.
MID-EAST Wicklow, Kildare, Meath, Louth. **SOUTH WEST** Cork, Kerry.
SOUTH EAST Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow, Wexford.
MID-WEST Clare, Tipperary, Limerick. **WEST** Galway, Mayo, Roscommon.
BORDER Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan.

2018 Accommodation Supply IN OFFALY

- 8 Hotels with 936 beds
- 9 Bed & Breakfasts with 94 beds
- 1 Guesthouse with 23 beds
- 2 Irish Welcome Standard with 261 beds

*Fáilte Ireland registered/approved accommodation. Source: Capita

In general, holidaymakers spend the largest portion of holiday nights staying in hotels (38%). Guesthouses/B&Bs are next most popular for overnight stays (21%). American and British holidaymakers favour hotels, while the French and Germans prefer guesthouses and B&Bs.

Projects funded through Fáilte Ireland CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN OFFALY (2015-2019)*

Attraction



Upgrade to the
Visitor Centre Science
Galleries at Birr Castle

Fáilte Ireland funding to date

€48,400

Total project amount

€66,799

Total project costs may change.

* Fáilte Ireland funded projects often include match funding from key partners such as local authorities, the Office of Public Works, Coillte and the National Parks & Wildlife Service.