

Laois County Council

SHOPFRONT GRANT SCHEME

Terms and Conditions

Please read this guide before completing the grant application form

1. Who/What Types of buildings are eligible for these grants?

Owners or Leaseholders of independently owned Retail or Commercial Premises are eligible for this scheme. Please note Chain store exemptions may apply. Ground floor premises fronting onto a public road and premises zoned Town/Village Centre (in the case of Portlaoise premises zoned Town Centre Primary) are also eligible.

2. Do I need to ask the owner if I don't own the property?

Leaseholders must submit the owner's written consent with the application (any community groups operating with the written consent of the owner may also be considered).

3. What costs will the grant cover?

The grant will only be paid for works outlined in the "Letter of Approval" issued by the Local Authority. Any works undertaken **prior** to the "Letter of Approval" being issued **will not** be funded by the Local Authority. The grant in any case shall not exceed 50% of the overall approved cost and is subject to a maximum grant of €750 per unit. The grant may be increased to a maximum of €1,000 where applications include accessibility works (e.g. accessibility ramps and railings).

4. Assessment

Applications will be assessed by the Business Support Unit with premises also being inspected by an official from the Planning Department. Once conducted, considerations will have been given towards the proposed design, materials used, and overall impact in line with the schemes eligibility criteria. The applicant should refer to the Laois County Development Plan to ensure that the works they are undertaking are in adherence with the policies contained therein.

5. Do I need planning permission?

The majority of the works allowed under the scheme may not need planning permission however you should consult the Council's Planning Department to clarify - planning@laoiscoco.ie. Applicants may make an application for the grant in advance of obtaining planning permission (if required) and where successful will receive an offer of funding in principle. However, where permission is required, approved works cannot start until a final grant of planning permission is received. For more information on making a planning application visit <https://laois.ie/departments/planning/applying-for-planning-permission/>

6. When will I receive the grant?

Following completion of the works, submission of the following documentation must be made: Supplier Setup Form, Photographs of completed works, Copy of paid invoice(s), & Evidence of payment i.e. bank statement showing transaction(s) above. A final inspection will then be carried out by a Council Official before the grant payment is made.

7. Are there other financial terms to comply with before I get paid?

Costs must be verified by the submission of invoices and bank statements prior to the payment of the grant. The applicant must either have paid rates in full or be in compliance with a payment plan / agreement regarding rates.

8. Can I reapply if I have previously been approved for funding?

Businesses who have been approved for the scheme in the previous 3 year period cannot reapply.

9. What happens if the fund is oversubscribed?

If the fund is oversubscribed, preference will be given to proposals that have the most potential to improve the appearance or the vitality and vibrancy of Laois Towns and Villages.

Any queries in relation to the scheme should be directed to the Business Support Unit. Email: businesssupport@laoiscoco.ie Tel: (057) 8664000