



Guidance Notes for application for funding under Measure 3 of the GAGF LEADER Programme - “Gozitan Attractions and Innovative Events for all Season” – Develop Gozo’s all-season tourism product offering (Second Call)

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The Rural Development Programme for Malta 2014-2020



LEADER
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)
Co-financing rate: 75% EU Funds; 25% National Funds



***The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe Investing in Rural Areas***

In case of any conflicts between these guidance notes and the text of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020, GAGF Local Development Strategy and other legislative text, the interpretation given by the relevant legislation will be given overall priority.

The Foundation reserves the right to request also additional information not included in the accompanying application form

Definitions:

Agriculture and Rural Paying Agency (ARPA): The Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency within the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries, and Animal Rights is the Paying Agency.

Checks and controls: Provide a means of verification that the investment operation complies with, and is in conformity to, the relevant rules and regulations.

Cost-effectiveness analysis: Compares the costs and effects of an intervention to assess the extent to which it can be regarded as providing value for money.

Decision Committee (DC): The DC of the LAG is the decision-making body in relation to all activities.

DNO: Development Notification Order

EAFRD: European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

EAFRD regulation: Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of 17 December 2013 on support for rural development by the EAFRD.

Evaluation Committee (EC): A committee appointed by the LAG and can be constituted by at least 2 members. Both are responsible for administratively checking the applications.

Evaluation: A periodic collection and analysis of evidence to form conclusions on the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions.

Grant Agreement: An agreement signed between the LAG and the selected applicant (beneficiary) containing provisions and conditions related to the particular support.

GAGF: Gozo Action Group Foundation

Local Action Groups (LAGs): A Local Action Group (LAG) is a non-profit-making composition made up of public and private organizations from rural villages having a broad representation from different socio-economic sectors.

LEADER: *Liason Entre Actions de Development de l'Economie Rurale*. The LEADER programme refers to the implementation of the actions included in the Local Development strategies by the LAG to address specific local issues in line with the Rural Development programme for 2014-2020.

Local Development Strategies (LDS): a coherent set of operations established to meet local objectives and needs, and which contributes to meeting the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and which is designed and implemented by a local action group.

Managing Authority (MA): A national or regional body designated by a Member State to manage a

rural development programme.

Measure: An Aid Scheme for implementing a policy. Each measure sets out specific rules to be complied with by the projects or actions that can be financed. There are two main types of measures: investment measures and area-related aid.

NGOs: refer to entities that are enrolled and fully compliant with the Voluntary Organisations Act and its subsidiary legislation 492.01 (Annual Returns and Annual Accounts) Regulations 2012. The GAGF will confirm with the Commissioner whether VOs are compliant prior to the disbursement of funds.

PA: Planning Authority

Project Selection Appeals Board (PSAB): An independent Committee that assesses any submissions of appeals.

Project Selection Committee (PSC): The role of the Decision Committee includes the assessment and review of all recommendations made by the Evaluation committee. The PSC assesses and ranks applications.

Results: The direct effects or changes that arise due to the intervention.

Rural Development Programme (RDP): A document prepared by a Member State or region, and approved by the Commission, to plan and monitor the implementation of the rural development policy.

Single undertaking includes all enterprises having at least one of the following relationships with each other:

- a. One enterprise has a majority of the shareholder's or members' voting rights in another enterprise;
- b. One enterprise has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another enterprise;
- c. One enterprise has the right to exercise a dominant influence over another enterprise pursuant to a contract entered into with that enterprise or to a provision in its memorandum or articles of association;
- d. One enterprise, which is a shareholder in or member of another enterprise, controls alone, pursuant to an agreement with other shareholders in or members of that enterprise, a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in that enterprise.

Enterprises having any of the relationships referred to in points (a) to (d) through one or more other enterprises shall also be considered to be a single undertaking

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1. Introduction

These Guidance Notes are intended to assist Applicants understand the requirements for requesting and receiving funding support under **Measure 3 – Gozitan Attractions and Innovative Events for all Seasons – Develop Gozo’s all-season tourism product offering (Second Call)** of the Local Development Strategy for Gozo and Comino.

One of the main problems for economic development of Gozo remains the seasonality of tourism, which persists in spite of national tourism trends pointing to an attenuation of the phenomenon, thanks to weekends stays of international tourists and, in the specific case of Gozo, the opportunities offered by domestic tourism. Opportunities to develop all-season tourism exist in the creation of attractions based on Gozo’s cultural and natural heritage¹, and on the organisation of specific events. This action aims to satisfy this need, in a manner that creates synergies between interventions, as well as effective collaboration and networking between different actors across the entire region. The indicative budgets for individual applications aim at engendering interventions with sufficient critical mass. The involvement of business operators, especially in the undertaking of events, is intended to create sustainable activities which span beyond the end of the Programming period.

Applicants are advised to familiarise themselves with these Guidance Notes prior to filling in and preparing the Application Form. The Guidance Notes, Application Form and all annexes and other documentation are available at www.leadergozo.eu under the sub-heading Downloads – Funding Calls².

Applicants are reminded to check that they referred to the latest guidance notes as available on the website, and that they have filled in the latest available version of the application form that is available for download from the website. Only the latest version at the time of application will be accepted.

2. Rationale for Intervention

Relevance to LEADER approach	Enhancing competitiveness, innovation and quality of life	The action is innovative in providing a solution to attract off-peak tourism in Gozo through the undertaking of complementary infrastructural developments and events. This will improve economic competitiveness, and lead to a better quality of life in all aspects of the sustainable development model.
	Promoting a bottom-up approach, partnership and networking	The measure requires partnerships between NGOs, public governance entities and business operators. Networking within a bottom-up approach is therefore promoted.
	Avoidance of overlapping with other interventions	This action, within its full scope and reach, is not considered to replicate other interventions, although there may be specific elements that could be financed through other sources but

¹ Natural heritage refers to biodiversity, including flora and fauna, ecosystems and geological structures.

² <http://leadergozo.eu/index.php/downloads/funding-calls/>

		that would be more effectively and efficiently undertaken as part of the holistic action that was proposed in the LDS.
Relevance to Gozo	Identified addresses under this measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The physical interventions undertaken through this action are expected to lead to environmental amelioration and better climate performance, ideally by also focusing on related tourism niches. • The events supporting investments are expected to preserve, valorise and evolve distinctive and unique features of Gozitan lifestyle. • The action is expected to create investment and events that preserve cultural and natural heritage³ assets and valorise their economic competitiveness.
	Elements of continuation from previous programme	The previous programme financed aspects of improvements in infrastructure, as well as the undertaking of events. These interventions were well-received, but now needs to be renewed through more innovative and holistic means that guarantee future sustainability.
	Innovative elements for Gozo	The creation of events jointly with infrastructural ameliorations where business elements would be involved is innovative in Gozo, leading to better outcome with a greater chance of future financial sustainability.
	Improving networking in Gozo	
	Engendering critical mass in interventions	While absorbing a significant amount of the available budget, the resources that this measure could potentially take are significantly larger. Critical mass thus require investment by the private sector to leverage the resources provided through LEADER (CLLD). It is essential that animation activities clearly explain this issue to potential applicants, which will be key to the durability of benefits which is expected through the Strategy.
Effectiveness	Best available approach as compared to other actions	Other alternative actions that could be contemplated would involve individual, differentiated actions to support specific interventions in infrastructure and events. These alternatives are considered to involve higher costs and to be less effective than a unified approach that encourages partnerships and synergies, especially within the context of involving business to leverage on publicly-funded investment.

³ Natural heritage refers to biodiversity, including flora and fauna, ecosystems and geological structures.

	Balance in interventions within and across actions	The action is absorbing around 45% of the total budget and is itself to be by design divided among various complementary interventions.
	Synergies within action and with other actions	The components of the action provide obvious synergies. The action itself can provide material to be used within the context of Measure 1 and can have effects on the quality of life for youths and young families, thereby contributing to the effects of Measure 4.
	Sustainability of project benefits	This is designed to be obtained through the participation of private business entities, which would financially sustain the activity through the improved business performance that it would be generating. There can also be elements of public support, subject to State Aid rules, in this regard.
Efficiency and Regulatory Compliance		The budget is considered to be sufficient in that through the partnership base established, efficiency and regulatory compliance can be attained in a cost-effective manner. The participation of public governance entities could support this function.

3. Aim and Scope of the Measure

Investment in infrastructure and innovative events which will in a complementary manner strengthen Gozo's tourism offering so as to enhance performance across all seasons, in a sustainable manner.

4. General Description of the Actions

Projects must be **physically undertaken** in any of the rural localities that constitute the Gozo Action Group Foundation territory.

Type of Operation

The action will enable physical interventions to localities and the organisation of tourism-oriented event that achieve the following objectives:

- i. Development of infrastructure, including green infrastructure, aimed at attracting tourists all year round but especially in the off-peak season (September to May) and for longer stays, ideally valorising the tourism attractiveness across localities within the territory, with a strong emphasis on sustainability;
- ii. Development of innovative events to attract international and domestic tourists all year round but especially in the off-peak season (September to May), ideally in synergy with the development of infrastructures, and which would lead to financially sustainable activities with the involvement of the business community;
- iii. Enhance the involvement of Gozo Local Councils and NGOs in the improvements of the Gozitan tourism all year round but especially in the off-peak tourism (September to May) product, mainly in valorising the natural and cultural environment as bases for the development of sustainable and sustained tourism activity.

Type of Support

The type of activities which can be supported through grants include:

- i. Small-scale infrastructural interventions contributing to all seasons but especially off-peak season tourism activities in localities;
- ii. The organisation of up to eight events during the programming period.

These activities, and similar ones as may be proposed by project proposers, will furthermore be subject to inspection and verification in terms of their functional set-up. In this regard, the LAG will be following the spirit, the principles and practices that are applicable within the public service in Malta in the area of procurement.

5. Eligibility Criteria

The following general eligibility criteria shall apply for the evolution of proposals for action to be supported under this measure:

- Submitted application (including a Contracting, Disbursement, and Payment Claim Schedule) is fully completed, signed and duly filled-in with details required by the Decision Committee to evaluate the application for eligibility and selection;
- The applicant (project leader) is able to demonstrate that s/he forms part of (or is the legal representative of) the beneficiary/applicant organisation;
- The proposed project will be implemented within the GAGF territory;
- The applicant is able to demonstrate evidence of sufficient financial capacity required to finance the project and to fund the private financial component (*refer to section 30 of these guidance notes – applicant requirements checklist*);
- The proposed project contributes to the general and specific objectives of the measure for Gozo needs as identified in the Local Development Strategy for Gozo and Comino:
 - ‘*Climate and Environment*’: the physical investment undertaken through this action are expected to lead to environmental amelioration and better climate performance, ideally by also focusing on related tourism niches;
 - ‘*Gozo Lifestyle*’: the events supporting investments are expected to preserve, valorise and evolve distinctive and unique features of Gozitan lifestyle;
 - ‘*Cultural Heritage*’: the action is expected to create investment and events which preserve cultural heritage assets and valorising their economic competitiveness.

The action is expected to result in landscape and environmental amelioration through physical interventions which would create tourism attractions within landscape and environmental amenities which can be enjoyed across all seasons.

The action is expected to create a direct contribution to incomes and jobs by generating tourism demand that is better spread across the year.

The infrastructure developed, and the complementary events aimed at enhancing Gozo’s all-year tourism offering can be expected to introduce innovative elements in tourism within the Region and possibly at the national level.

The action will require physical interventions to be environmentally-friendly and resource-efficient, potentially also focused on sustainable tourism niches.

The GAGF reserves the right to revise the eligibility criteria applicable to the Measure, subject to pre-notification.

Description of the requirement and targets

The applicant is required to demonstrate that the proposed investment shall result in the achievement of the Measure's objectives.

Applicants must demonstrate how the proposed project leads to the development of Gozo's all-season tourism product offering

6. Eligible Investment

Eligible Investments supported under Measure 3 must include a combination as follows:

- Investment in infrastructures, up to 90% of budget
- Event organisation, a minimum of 10% of budget

Only eligible investments cost incurred after the contract agreement are to be considered as eligible. The percentages are a cap on the amount allowed to be allocated on each area. For instance: if the budget is €200,000, €180,000 maximum is to be allocated to infrastructure (not more than 90%).

Projects should remain functional for at least five years following the last payment.

Investments must be in line with the General Description of the Actions as outlined in Section 4 of the Guidance Notes.

7. Non-Eligible Investment

The following is an indicative list of non-eligible investments under Measure 3:

- Acquisition of lands and buildings;
- Construction of new buildings (or extension of build structures) in the countryside or on the coast;
- Hard-surfacing, clearing or formalisation of rural/coastal land (e.g. soil, natural bedrock, information beaten earth tracks or pathways), or new or extended roads in the countryside;
- Topographical alterations in the countryside or on the coast, or removal/dismantling of natural/rural features (e.g. excavation of natural bedrock, dismantling of rubble walls, uprooting of trees) on rural/coastal land;
- Installation of overhead wiring and poles (including new or extended installation, or replacement with new poles), or trenching in the countryside beyond the legal footprint of already-existing roads;
- Sanction of illegal rural structures;
- Acquisition of second-hand equipment;
- Acquisition of means of transportation;
- Currency exchange losses;
- Bank Interest;
- Provisional costs that are not directly related to the investment (e.g. storage costs for keeping materials);
- Indirect Administration fees not directly related to the investment (salaries, insurance obligations and running costs);
- Income Tax or other operational costs of the entity applying for the project, including provisions for possible future losses or debts;
- Inputs which are the subject of a contribution in kind;
- Works in kind;

- Expenditures made before the launch of the call for application (the applicant should refer to Article 60 of Regulation 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and Council. Only eligible investments cost incurred after the contract agreement are to be considered as eligible;
- Value Added Tax (except where it is non-recoverable under national VAT legislation). Grant assistance may be provided in respect of non-recoverable VAT. Written confirmation from the VAT Department that the project application is not-registered for VAT must be presented by the applicant.
- Statutory fines and penalties
- Works that are connected with projects, process or intervention that are in breach of law or which infringe the terms, conditions or approved specifications of any permit or licence issued by public authority.

8. Type of Beneficiaries

Applications are accepted from entities regularly operating or providing a service within the geographic area covered by the GAGF.

Applicants must include partnerships between business operators with a direct interest in tourism and/or representatives' bodies thereof, Local Councils and/or public governance entities with a direct interest in the Gozo region, and NGOs.

It is important to note that:

- i. Private undertakings where eligible, are to be limited to SME's. Large firms (as per Eurostat definition), are excluded.
- ii. NGOs refer to entities that are enrolled and fully compliant with the Voluntary Organisations Act and its subsidiary legislation 492.02 (Annual Returns and Annual Accounts) Regulations 2012. The GAGF will confirm with the Commissioner whether VOs are compliant prior to the disbursement of funds.
- iii. Only Local Councils that have fully paid the LAG membership fees are eligible for funding.

Any one entity (whether main beneficiary and/or partner) can apply for one or more of the measures but cannot participate under different / competing applications (including applications already awarded) within the same measure.

Any conflict of interest in the selection process is removed through the exclusion of applicants from board of selection, since all foreseen local councils in Gozo are members of the LAG.

It is important that the applicant is a member of the decision board/unit/committee (or is the legal representative) of the beneficiary/applicant organizing.

9. Contingency Plans

The beneficiary must submit a contingency plan in case the organisation of event/s is not held for any reason beyond the beneficiary's control. For instance: if the event is not organised due to inclement weather, etc., the beneficiary must provide a contingency plan on the procedure to organise the event/s at a later date.

Should the beneficiary opt for the Contingency plan, a formal notification must be sent to the GAGF with an explanation of why the event has been postponed, together with evidence, and informing the GAGF that the beneficiary is planning to go ahead with the Contingency plan by filling a Change

Request Form, which can be downloaded from the GAGF website (<https://leadergozo.eu/index.php/funding-calls/>).

The GAGF reserves the right to refuse the implementation of the Contingency plan, if the reason for postponing the event/s is not justifiable.

10. State Aid Rules and Obligations

The terms and conditions set out in these Guidance Notes are in line with Commission Regulation (EU) No. 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid [OJ L 352/1, 24.12.2013] (the *de minimis* Regulation), as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2020/972 of 2 July 2020, amending Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 as regards its prolongation and amending Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as regards its prolongation and relevant adjustments [OJ L 215/3, 7.7.2020].

Assistance may not be awarded to the following:

- a) Undertakings active in the fishery and aquaculture sector, as covered by Council Regulation (EC) No. 104/2000;
- b) Undertakings active in the primary production of agricultural products;
- c) Undertakings active in the sector of processing and marketing of agricultural products, in the following cases:
 - i. Where the amount of the aid is fixed on the basis of the price or quantity of such products purchased from primary producers or put on the market by the businesses concerned;
 - ii. Where the aid is conditional on being partly or entirely passed on to primary producers;
- d) Aid to export-related activities towards third countries or Member States, namely aid directly linked to the quantities exported, to the establishment and operation of a distribution network or to other current expenditure linked to the export activity;
- e) Aid contingent upon the use of domestic over imported goods;

The total amount of *de minimis* aid granted to a single undertaking shall not exceed the amount of €200,000 (or €100,000 in the case of a single undertaking performing road freight transport for hire or reward) over any period of three consecutive fiscal years. This period covers the fiscal year concerned as well as the previous two fiscal years. 'Fiscal year' means the fiscal year as used for tax purposes by the undertaking concerned.

This maximum threshold would include all State aid granted under this aid scheme and any other State aid measure granted under the *de minimis* rule including that received from any entity other than the Gozo Action Group Foundation. Any *de minimis* aid received in excess of the established threshold will have to be recovered, with interest, from the undertaking receiving the aid.

The term 'single undertaking' is defined as follows:

Single Undertaking includes, for the purposes of this scheme, all enterprises having at least one (1) of the following relationships with each other:

- a) one (1) enterprise has a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another enterprise;
- b) one (1) enterprise has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another enterprise;
- c) one (1) enterprise has the right to exercise a dominant influence over another enterprise pursuant to a contract entered into with that enterprise or to a provision in its memorandum or articles of association;
- d) one (1) enterprise, which is a shareholder in or member of another enterprise, controls alone, pursuant to an agreement with other shareholders in or members of that enterprise, a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in that enterprise.

Enterprises having any of the relationships referred to in points (a) to (d) above through one or more other enterprises shall also be considered to be a single undertaking.

The *de minimis* Regulation states that a group of linked enterprises is considered as one single undertaking for the application of the *de minimis* rule, but that enterprises which have no relationship with each other except for the fact that each of them has a direct link to the same public body or bodies are not treated as being linked to each other. The specific situation of enterprises controlled by the same public body or bodies, which may have an independent power of decision, is therefore taken into account.

In terms of Article 5 of the *de minimis* Regulation, *de minimis* aid granted under this measure may be cumulated with *de minimis* aid granted in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) No 360/2012 up to the ceiling laid down in that Regulation. It may be cumulated with *de minimis* aid granted in accordance with other *de minimis* regulations up to the relevant ceiling fixed in terms of the *de minimis* Regulation.

De minimis aid awarded under this measure shall not be cumulated with State aid in relation to the same eligible costs, if such cumulation would exceed the highest relevant aid intensity or aid amount fixed in the specific circumstances of each case by a block exemption regulation or a decision adopted by the European Commission. *De minimis aid* which is not granted for or attributable to specific eligible costs may be cumulated with other State aid granted under a block exemption regulation or a decision adopted by the Commission.

The *de minimis* declaration form must be filled in and submitted together with the application form.

In line with the *de minimis* Regulation, records regarding *de minimis* aid shall be maintained for 10 years from the date on which the last individual aid is granted under the Scheme.

11. Aid Intensities

A beneficiary will be granted the following financial assistance should the proposed investment be selected:

- 80% of the total eligible expenditure.

The other 20% of the total eligible expenditure must be borne by the applicant. Local Councils are entitled for support of the 20% total eligible expenditure as per Circular DĠ/K/01/2018 issued on the 26 June 2018.

The VAT element must be borne by the applicant (except where it is non-recoverable under National VAT legislation). Grant assistance may be provided in respect of non-recoverable VAT. Written confirmation from the VAT Department that the project applicant is not-registered for VAT must be presented by the applicant.

The VAT Declaration Form (annex 2 of these guidance notes) should be duly filled by the applicant.

The total amount of *de minimis* aid granted to a single undertaking will not exceed €200,000 (or €100,000 in the case of a single undertaking performing road freight transport for hire or reward) over any period of three fiscal years.

12. Indicators and Targets (As per regulation 808/2014)

Number of Local Councils (municipalities) affected by physical interventions:	5
Number of business affected by improved infrastructures and events:	5
Number of NGOs affected by action:	5
Number of cultural/environmental heritage tourism amenities improved:	6

13. Financing – Budget

The total allocated budget for this call is set at **€363,377.94**, will be financed through the EAFRD.

The **maximum** grant support through the EAFRD for each project is **capped at €180,000**. The remaining 20% will be financed by the Beneficiary.

The **minimum** grant support through the EAFRD for each project is **capped at €95,000**. The remaining 20% will be financed by the Beneficiary.

In the case of oversubscription of the call, the **GAGF MAY** reserve the right to allocate additional funds to this measure following approval by the Managing Authority.

14. The Application Process – General Provisions

- Interested applicants need to submit the completed application form for Measure 3.
- All applications must be completed in full, signed and dated by the Project Leader.
- No parts of the application form are to be left blank – in cases where specific requested information in the application are not applicable to the applicant, the applicant must fill in the field with the note ‘Not applicable’.
- Although GAGF representatives are available for meetings with interested applicants, it is the ultimate duty of the applicants to read thoroughly the guidance notes and application form. It is also the ultimate responsibility of the applicants to ensure that all documentation requested is correctly presented. Applicants must also ensure that the applicants themselves fall within the criteria of eligibility and that project proposed and any related investments

are eligible for funding and that the application form and the requested supporting documentation **are presented by hand within the deadline of the call.**

- It is not the duty of GAGF to verify the above matters irrespective of any meetings that may be held between GAGF and the applicants.
- Applicants should submit three copies (1 original and 2 copies, which have to be spiral bound) of the Application Form and a soft copy (in Word format and pdf format) of the Application Form on a cd/pen drive. All copies must include all supporting documentation attached to the original Application Form. In case of soft copies, each separate document is to be individually presented and adequately titled for ease of reference.
- A checklist of attachments is attached to the Application Form. The applicants must ensure that **ALL** the obligatory supporting documentation as per *Section 9* of the application form are submitted.
- Any financial declarations / certificates need to be dated not more than three months prior to the deadline of the call.
- For the application to be considered complete, all attachments marked obligatory are to be submitted with the Application Form. The Gozo Action Group Foundation will undertake a validity check following receipt of the application. Any required documentation not submitted with the application form shall be requested within not less than 5 working days from the date of a notification letter sent by Gozo Action Group Foundation. Only complete applications will be considered by the Project Selection Committee.
- The Call for proposal will open on Monday, **27th of June 2022** with the deadline for submissions being Thursday, **28th of July 2022 at noon**. Applications received after this deadline **WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED**. Applicants are encouraged not to leave to the last day to submit their application.
- All applications are to be delivered **BY HAND** to the Gozo Action Group Foundation at the following address:

*Gozo Action Group Foundation
23, Triq G.P.F. Agius De Soldanis
Victoria. VCT 1032*

In case of queries or clarifications required, applicants may contact Gozo Action Group Foundation on the following contact details on email: info@leadergozo.eu or telephone: +356 2155 0322. The deadline for submission of clarifications is Thursday 21st of July 2022, at noon.

***Disclaimer:** The issuance of the receipt letter does not imply that the applicant will be considered as a main beneficiary under this call. The application may be refused and returned to the applicant following the issuance of the receipt letter.*

15. Evaluation – Administrative Checks

The Gozo Action Group Foundation will carry out administrative checks on submitted applications. It is important that the submitted application form is filled-in correctly and completely. In case an application is submitted with missing documentation/information, a notification letter will be sent to the applicant allowing a period of 5 working days from the date of the notification to submit the

missing documentation and/or information.

If the requested documentation is not submitted within this timeframe, the application will be automatically disqualified, and a rejection letter will be sent by the Gozo Action Group Foundation administration to inform the applicant.

Gozo Action Group Foundation will then carry out verification of the eligibility of the supporting documentation submitted, as well as the screening of the application in terms of the eligibility criteria. It is important to note that it is within the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the content of the application and the supporting documentation submitted is in full and in line with what is being requested.

With reference to any quotations to be submitted by the applicant, the Evaluation Committee reserves the right to ask for further clarifications or necessary adjustments even after the applicant submits the missing documentation/clarifications. The Evaluation Committee reserves the right to contact suppliers/service providers to validate the quotations provided.

No further additional information will be accepted after the closing date for applications unless it is requested by GAGF. In this regard, it is the applicant's sole responsibility to ensure that the application is complete in the best possible way before submission. Evaluation of the application will be carried out only on the information submitted at the application stage or any other information as requested by GAGF. **Any false or misleading information will lead to the immediate rejection of the application.**

16. Selection Process

A Project Selection Committee (PSC) made up from the Decision Committee members will be responsible for ranking and selecting applications for support after close liaison with the EC members. The PSC may request the services of a technical expert to assist the whole evaluation process. The PSC reserves the right to request additional information and further clarifications on the project as part of the selection process.

17. Ranking of Projects and Selection Process

The PSC will proceed to award marks to each proposal based on the information submitted in the applications and provided through clarifications (where applicable). In order to qualify for selection, the proposal needs to obtain a total of at least 50% of the total marks of the general and measure-specific selection criteria. For those eligible projects going through the assessment stage, the PSC will seek clearance from the State Aid Monitoring Board (SAMB).

A preliminary list of the proposals containing selected, on reserve and failed applicants together with their respective score shall be drawn up. Furthermore, the PSC reserves the right to request project re-dimensioning in special circumstances.

The preliminary result shall be published on Gozo Action Group Foundation's official website⁴. In addition, a notification letter shall be sent to applicants informing them of their right of appeal in cases where applications fail to qualify.

18. Unsuccessful Project Proposals

⁴ <http://www.leadergozo.eu>

In the notification letter sent to the applicant, reasons why the project was not selected shall be provided. The applicant shall have the right to appeal in writing through a registered letter within 5 working days from receipt of the email/letter of notification of result sent by the LAG.

The appeal is to be addressed to the Chairperson of the Project Selection Appeals Board (PSAB). The PSAB is an independent Committee set up to review in an autonomous way any appeals lodged. The PSAB will be composed of a minimum of three (3) individuals with a Chairperson chairing the appeals process. The appellant is required to sustain the clarifications provided by including justified reasons backed by necessary supporting documentation/testimonials.

The applicants wishing to lodge an appeal must send a registered letter addressed to **“The Chairperson”, Project Selection Appeals Board of GAGF, Gozo Action Group Foundation, 23, Triq G.P.F Agius De Soldanis, Victoria, VCT 1032**, within 5 working days from receipt of the email/letter of notification (whichever the earliest) of result sent by the LAG.

The Appeals Board will not consider late appeals.

The letter should include a detailed reason/s of why the appeal is being made, supported by any relevant documentation/testimonials.

The Chairperson of PSAB shall review and assess the validity of all the appeals submitted within the stipulated timeframe. Valid appeals will be presented to the PSAB for assessment. No additional information other than that presented at application stage will be considered during the review. The relevant documentation shall be provided for the sole purpose of supporting the basis of the information provided in the appeal letter. An appeal that does not provide sufficient detailed reasons may be refused at the preliminary stage as unjustified.

Upon submission of the appeal, the Appeals Board shall be convened within no later than 5 working days to review the appeals presented. All necessary relevant documents will be made available to the Appeals Board by the LAG Manager.

The Appeals Board must conclude the process of appeals by no later than 15 working days from the appeals closure date. Upon finalisation of the process, a detailed report articulating all decisions taken must be presented to the DC.

The decision of the Appeals Board is **final**, and the applicant cannot contest this decision. The DC must notify in writing the decisions to each appellant. The appeals procedure shall be published on LAGs website.

19. Publication of Final Result

Upon completion of the appeals process, GAGF shall publish the final result of the projects eligible for financial support on its website and notice board.

The successful applicants will receive a ‘Letter of offer’ following the publication of the Final list of results. The applicants will be required to send a ‘Letter of acceptance’ (a draft copy of the Acceptance letter will be sent with the letter of offer) and a Bank Payment Form ((BPF), send with the letter of offer) within 10 working days from the receipt of the ‘Letter of Offer’.

If, after 10 working days, the LAG does not receive the letter of acceptance and a fully signed, stamped and dated Bank Payment Form (BPF), it will be considered that the applicant is no longer interested in undertaking the project and funds will be relocated according to the discretion of the LAG.

Should the beneficiary accept the offer, the eligible period of expenditure should start after the date of grant agreement

20. Procurement Procedures

At application stage, the beneficiary **must submit at least bill of quantity or at least one valid Financial Bid** for every line item.

Should the application be chosen for funding, the beneficiary must adhere to the below applicable procurement procedures:

- i. Local Councils are to strictly adhere to the Procurement Guidelines issued by the Department for Local Government.
- ii. Private undertakings are to follow [MA PA EAFRD Circular 01/2021](#), which may be downloaded at the below link:

<https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/EU%20Funds%20Programmes/European%20Agricultural%20Fund/Pages/Circulars.aspx>

Applicants are guided to refer to the “Guidelines on the Submission of Payment Claims related to Investment Measures” issued by ARPA for details related to the required content and format of quotations and other procurement procedures; these guidelines may be downloaded at the below link:

<https://agriculture.gov.mt/en/arpa/Documents/guidelines/investmentMeasuresPaymentGuidelinesFinalEN-V3.0.pdf>

21. Contracting with Beneficiaries

Contracting shall be undertaken by the GAGF with the beneficiaries. In the case of entities, contracts are to be signed by the LAG’s Chairperson (or any formally authorised delegate) and a legal representative of the beneficiary. In case where the signatory on behalf of the beneficiary is not a legal representative, a power of attorney must be presented showing delegation of signatories between the legal representative and the appointed signatory. The power of attorney is to be endorsed by a public notary.

The contract shall be given to the beneficiary for verification prior to it being signed. The contract shall be signed in two originals (one for the LAG and another for the beneficiary). Copies and all the relevant documentation of the project must be maintained in a secure location by the beneficiaries for a period of seven (7) years from the date of signing. Gozo Action Foundation will retain records for ten (10) years from the date on which the last aid was granted under the scheme.

22. Payment

- All successful applicants are eligible for an advance payment of up to 50% of the total eligible cost of the project.
- The issuing of an advance payment is subject to the submission of a financial guarantee issued by a recognised financial institution equivalent to the 100% of the amount eligible as advance payment.
- The facility of interim payments will be provided by the Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency (ARPA).

- Interim payments (of up to 80% of the total eligible value of the project) will be issued following the submission of a request for reimbursement and financial documentation (including invoices and receipts).
- In case of infrastructural works a provisional certificate of works prepared by an engineer/architect must also be presented.
- The final payment of the remaining 20% of the total eligible cost of the project will be made following the completion of the services and submission of the request for reimbursement together with the necessary financial documentation (including invoices and receipts, and where applicable - a provisional certificate of works or a final completion certificate of works prepared by a warranted architect).
- The final payment will be affected once an on-the-spot-check is carried out by GAGF and ARPA and adherence to the contract is confirmed.
- The main applicants must present a payment claim through the LAG, so that the necessary verifications and controls are undertaken prior to submission to ARPA for processing.
- In case of irregularities, penalties and sanctions may be applied.
- Official certification by the architect appointed by the beneficiary is required for settlement of final payment (in case of infrastructural works).
- The project including the claims submitted to ARPA by beneficiaries is to be completed by the 31st of December 2023.
- The final claim for reimbursement of funds allocated to the project must also be submitted within the deadline.

23. Extension to Contract Timeframes

Should the beneficiary require an extension to the timeframe stipulated in the application form and contract, a written request is to be submitted to GAGF. The form to be used in such case is the 'Change Request Form' and the request should be sent before the actual expiry of the original timeframe.

A request for approval of an extension of the time required in order to terminate the project is to be backed by written justified reasons. Cases related to poor project management will not be accepted. Following review of the request by the GAGF, the final decision will be sent to the beneficiary in writing. Should an extension be approved, the period of extension shall be determined by GAGF, after consultation with the Managing Authority.

In cases where amendments to the contract are required, the beneficiary must submit a 'Change Request Form' to GAGF prior to the changes being actually implemented (a priori) and the beneficiary must wait for a reply from GAGF.

If a request for changes to the contract is submitted after these changes have actually taken place (ex-post), the changes will not be eligible for funding and, depending on the extent of the changes, this may lead to the whole project being considered ineligible.

The written request for changes must indicate the changes required, the necessary justification and relevant supporting documentation.

GAGF will review the request and if the proposal does not affect the nature of the project and remains in line with the objectives of the Measure, the changes may be approved. A notification letter will be sent to the beneficiary in writing and an addendum to the contract shall be carried out and signed between all parties.

If the request for changes is not approved by GAGF, the beneficiary will receive a notification and will be requested to confirm whether the project as stipulated in the contract will be completed or withdrawn.

Failure to comply with the contract

Failure to meet the commitments stipulated in the contract shall result in sanctions applied to the amounts committed or paid. The Agriculture and Rural Payments Agency, Internal Audit and Investigations Department (IAID), the European Commission (EC), the European Anti Fraud Office (DG OLAF) and/or the Managing Authority reserve the right to undertake further checks and controls and to recover any funds from the beneficiary by withholding the bank guarantee in case of advanced payments.

24. Project Sustainability

It is to be noted that in line with Article 71 of Regulation 1303/2013, in the case of an operation in infrastructure or productive investment, the applicant shall repay the contribution from the EAFRD Funds if within (5) years of the final payment to the beneficiary or within the period of time set out in State aid Rules, where applicable, it is subject to any of the following:

- a) A cessation or relocation of a productive activity outside the programme area;
- b) A change in ownership of an item of infrastructure which gives to a firm or a public body an undue advantage;
- c) A substantial change affecting its nature, objectives or implementation conditions which would result in undermine its original objectives.

The beneficiary must not commit any infringement or circumvention of the terms under which a clearance was issued by the relevant competent authorities (e.g. significant departure from approved specifications, or breach of conditions).

25. Publicity

In case of information and publicity, the main beneficiaries must abide by the provisions of Part 2 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 808/2014, as well as any Publicity/Visibility Guidelines that may be provided by the GAGF through MA.

In order to meet the requirements of the EAFRD Regulations, beneficiaries must ensure that adequate publicity is given to the project with a view to:

- a. making potential participants aware of the opportunities afforded by it;
- b. making the general public aware of the role of the Community in relation to the project;
- c. ensure transparency of the assistance concerned;
- d. As an example, materials used by the Beneficiary and major correspondence, including contracts signed with third parties must include any acknowledgement of EAFRD support;

- e. Any publicity material, such as advertisements, billboards and information leaflets about EAFRD co-financed projects must acknowledge this support;
- f. Publicity of individual projects must be incorporated into the project budget;
- g. Applicants are to be cautious when determining publicity actions for the project;
- h. Applicants should also ensure that the project benefits from any free publicity and that anything that will be proposed to be funded under the project is either obligatory or adds value to the results of the project, taking into account the value for money principle. In this regard, publicity measures of individual projects should take into account the nature of the project and must be relative to the size and objectives of the project;
- i. The Beneficiary should note that publicity may only be used to increase awareness of what EU funds are used for and to disseminate results. Publicity measures undertaken must be project specific;
- j. Publicity and information measures must not be used as a marketing tool to promote an organisation, its products, services or infrastructure. Where a project includes an element of marketing, this must be used to complement but not replace the project's obligatory information and publicity measures; and
- k. Marketing efforts should be included as a separate activity in the project and as a separate budgetary allocation and justified accordingly. The Applicant may also make reference to the 'Visual Identity Guidelines' that may be downloaded from the below link:

<https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/EU%20Funds%20Programmes/European%20Agricultural%20Fund/Pages/Links%20and%20Downloads/Publicity.aspx>

26. Data Protection

Gozo Action Group Foundation has the duty to protect data provided in the Application Form. Any queries regarding Data Protection matters should be brought to the attention of the Gozo Action Group Foundation. The officer in charge can be contacted by e-mail on: info@leadergozo.eu

27. Retention of Documents

The applicant is to retain all documentation in a project file (required to ensure any adequate audit trail) safely stored.

All documents pertaining to the implementation of the project must be retained by the applicant for at least seven (7) years following the end of the programming period. This is to facilitate audits and the ex-post evaluation of the programme. Gozo Action Group Foundation will retain records for ten (10) years from the date on which the last aid was granted under the scheme.

28. Basic Terms and Conditions

- If a project application is successful, EU Funds will be offered on rigorous terms and conditions, which will be stipulated in the Grant Agreement. In accepting the offer of EU Funds, the Applicant will take on responsibility for compliance with these terms and conditions. These include requirements to demonstrate satisfactory progress in delivering

what the project has set out to achieve and adherence to an agreed pattern and time schedule of spending. Failure to meet these conditions and any false information given in the application may lead to the EU Funds being withdrawn and any EU Funds paid being recovered from the Applicant.

- All projects are subject to management verifications; and audits carried out by auditors (including by the Internal Audit and Investigation Department (IAID), the European Court of Auditors and European Commission (EC) Auditors), and evaluations (programme evaluators) enquiries by the DG OLAF. Officials from the GAGF, ARPA and MA and other horizontal stakeholders will also have rights of access to the project and all relevant documentation. Such officials could carry out spot checks (physical and documentary) to establish that sufficient progress is being made in line with the Grant Agreement and that the Beneficiary has put in place systems of management and control that ensure the efficient implementation of the project in line with the relevant Regulations and Procedures.
- If the project is selected for funding, the Applicant would be bound by the principles of transparency, good governance, sound financial management and the relevant national regulations.
- By submitting the Application, the Organisation is giving its automatic consent to publishing (including on the internet) the details of the Organisation and the project (including budget and implementation period) in line with the obligations in the relevant Council and Commission Regulations.
- The applicant should also be aware of the durability clause enshrined in Article 71 of Regulation 1303/2013, which states that an operation retains the contribution from the EAFRD only if that operation does not, within five years from the final payment of the competent authorities, undergo a substantial modification.
- The applicant is to declare whether an application for part or all of the proposed project has been submitted of assistance under any other Community Source including European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund (CF), etc. If in the affirmative the applicant is required to indicate all relevant details.
- The applicant organisation should note that if the project is accepted, the Applicant will be automatically giving his/her consent to have all the documents and data related to the project, (including name of project leader and other persons relevant to the project, invoices, receipts and documents related to contracts etc.) made available to all the relevant stakeholders including third party evaluators and auditors involved in the EAFRD fund system. The LAG reminds the Applicant that it is the responsibility of the Applicant to inform any third parties (including contractors) that all data and information relating to the project will be shared with other stakeholders, local and European.
- The chosen entity must ensure that all activities are carried out in compliance with applicable national and community rules and any other mandatory requirements as laid down in the Rural Development Programme for Malta (2014-2020). Failure to do so will result in penalties, with respect to the grant received plus interest accrued according to the law.
- The project proposals should remain subject to any legally required environmental assessment and environmental permits, and any ensuing restrictions, obligations and timelines. Any application for funding shall not affect such requirements and obligations

and shall not bind the relevant authorities to approve a project or to adopt less rigorous conditions or specifications.

- Planning permit where relevant. In case where a PA permit is required, the valid PA permit and approved drawings or the application submitted to PA and related drawings have to be presented as part of the documentation with the application. GAGF reserves the right to reject any project if the PA permit is not presented in time to allow the project to be completed by 15 months from the letter of award.

29. Selection criteria and Sub-criteria

An evaluation of the proposals will be carried out in accordance with the selection criteria set out in the Selection Criteria grid below:

	SELECTION CRITERIA	Maximum POINTS
1.	Number of distinct infrastructural interventions supported by the project (5 points per intervention up to a maximum of 15 points)	15 points
2.	Number of distinct events supported by the project. (5 points per intervention up to a maximum of 10 points)	10 points
3.	The degree of financial sustainability of the project:	
	i. during project implementation; and	5 points
	ii. after project implementation.	10 points
4.	The quality of the project in terms of:	
	i. the potential for the infrastructure developed to attract tourists all year round	10 points
	ii. the potential for events to attract tourists in the off-peak seasons	10 points
	iii. the degree of synergy between infrastructures developed and events proposed	5 points
	iv. creating opportunities for climate and environmental performance improvements in Gozo	5 points
	v. creating opportunities for innovative activities in Gozo	5 points
	vi. the potential to create jobs in Gozo	5 points
5.	Overall quality of the project proposal.	5 points
6.	Implementation readiness.	5 points
7.	Number of partners in proposed project (2 points per partner up to a maximum of 10 points)	10 points
TOTAL:		100 points

To be considered for funding or to be placed on the reserve list, a project must pass all the eligibility criteria (refer to Section 5 of these Guidance Notes) and must also obtain a minimum of **50 marks** out of the total marks allocated to the selection criteria. Please note that in relation to the above, the Project Selection Committee will be using the eligible criteria to mark the projects.

30. Application requirements checklist

List of requirements and annexes Checklist

The below is a list of supporting documentation that concerns the applicant/applications. Applicants are advised to note whether the submission of relevant documents:

- Is obligatory or required at application stage⁵, and also whether;
- It is compulsory for all applicants, or as applicable for a specific applicant⁶, as indicated in the list below:

<p>1. Original signed project application form together with two copies of the signed project application form and a cd/pen drive containing a soft copy of all documentation submitted (application should be saved in both word and pdf format). In case of soft copies, each separate document is to be individually presented and adequately titled for ease of reference. All copies must include all supporting documentation attached to the original Application Form. All the hard copies submitted must be spiral bound.</p> <p>(Obligatory at application stage)</p>	<i>Compulsory for all applicants</i>
<p>2. Audited Financial Statements for each partner for year N-1.⁷</p> <p>If N-1 year Audited Financial Statements are not available, the applicant is to submit management financial accounts for year N-1 and Audited Financial Statements for year N-2.</p> <p>In case of no Audited Financial Statements, a declaration confirming that the entity is not legally required to issue the Audited Financial Statements, and the available financial statements are to be submitted. Both the declaration and the available financial statements are to be endorsed by a certified Auditor or certified Accountant.</p> <p>(Required at application stage)</p>	<i>Compulsory for all partners</i>
<p>3. For each partner, a declaration signed by a Certified Auditor concerning the financial standing and the ability of the entity to continue conducting activities as a going concern</p> <p>(Required at application stage)</p>	<i>Compulsory for all partners</i>
<p>4. Declaration from a Certified Auditor confirming that the partners can match the 20% co-financing funding and VAT component (if applicable) required from own resources and can sustain the projects for five (5) years after its completion</p> <p>(Required at application stage)</p>	<i>Compulsory</i>
<p>5. Calculations of annual (operational) costs involved in sustaining the project for 5 years following the completion of the project and endorsed by an architect or a Certified Auditor.</p>	<i>Compulsory</i>

⁵ An obligatory document is one that MUST be submitted at application stage. Without such document, the application shall not be accepted. A required document is one that NEEDS to be submitted at application stage, but, if it is missing from the application, the applicant shall be notified to submit the missing documents within the stipulated period.

⁶ A Compulsory document is one that must be submitted by ALL applicants. A non-compulsory document is one that has to be submitted by an applicant, if applicable.

⁷ N is the current year.

(Required at application stage)	
<p>6. Specific deed of partnership between the partners involved in the project – agreement start date of partnership has to be dated before the submission of the application and the agreement end date of partnership has to be dated till the 5 years following the completion of the project.</p> <p>The agreement is expected to cater for the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - internal organization of the consortium; - distribution of the EAFRD funding; - additional rules on rights and obligations related to background and foreground intellectual property - settlement of internal disputes; & - liability, indemnification and confidentiality arrangements between the beneficiaries. <p>(Obligatory at application stage)</p>	<i>Compulsory</i>
<p>7. The role of each partner and the obligations for each partner</p> <p>(Obligatory at application stage)</p>	<i>Compulsory</i>
<p>8. Copy of Voluntary Organisation (VO) Certificate issued by the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations</p> <p>(Obligatory at application stage, where applicable)</p>	<i>Applicable for each VOs only</i>
<p>9. A copy of the latest certificate of compliance issued by the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations.</p> <p>(The GAGF retains the right to consult with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisation, to confirm that the Voluntary Organisation is compliant).</p> <p>(Required at application stage, where applicable)</p>	<i>Applicable for each VOs only</i>
<p>10. The latest VO Statute as approved by the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations</p> <p>(Obligatory at application stage, where applicable)</p>	<i>Applicable for each VOs only</i>
<p>11. List of committee members – Name & Surname, ID card number, and Address</p> <p>(Obligatory at application stage, where applicable)</p>	<i>Applicable for each VOs only</i>
<p>12. For each partner, a copy of the VAT Certificate</p> <p>(Obligatory at application stage, where applicable)</p>	<i>If applicable</i>
<p>13. For each partner, Latest Employment Return Form submitted to the Jobsplus Corporation which proves the number of Annual Work Units employed with the entity applying for the grant</p> <p>(Required at application stage, where applicable)</p>	<i>Where applicable</i>
<p>14. For each partner, a Tax Compliance Status report issued by the Office of the Commissioner for Revenue. Pending amounts in lieu of a Tax Compliance Certificate are only accepted in cases where the pending amount is solely the amount due to the</p>	<i>Compulsory</i>

Office of the Commissioner for Revenue by Malta Enterprise under the COVID 19 Wage Supplement Scheme. (Required at application stage)	
15. Copy of ID card of Project Leader, and legal representative of each partner (Obligatory at application stage)	<i>Compulsory</i>
16. Letter of intent signed by the entity's official representatives or the majority of the committee appointing the Project Leader (Obligatory at application stage)	<i>Compulsory</i>
17. Declaration from the Project Leader confirming that the project did not benefit from other EU or National Funds (Obligatory at application stage)	<i>Compulsory</i>
18. Signed declaration from owner of the premises specifying the address from where the applicant will be storing the investment and delivering the proposed service/s for the following 5 years from project completion date (in cases of investments that are NOT related to buildings). Local Councils must follow the Local Government Act, where no contract of premises is present If the applicant will be storing the investment at a different address from where the applicant will be delivering the proposed service, a signed declaration from the owner of the property specifying the address where the applicant will be storing the investment and another signed declaration from the owner of the property where the applicant will be delivering the proposed service. (Required at application stage, where applicable)	<i>Where applicable</i>
19. With respect to areas of physical intervention; Proof of Ownership of premises (in the case of owned premises); Proof/evidence of building lease/management agreement/guardianship deed (where applicable); Owners' consent (where applicable) – in the case of leased premises; Letter of Intent from Local Council/s. (Required at application stage, where applicable)	<i>Where applicable</i>
20. Joint Declaration by Mayor and Executive Secretary of the Local Council, stating that the Local Council commits to its co-financing obligations. (The GAGF retains the right to consult with the Director of Local Government (DLG) to check that the co-financing as declared by the Local Council is available/likely to be met. This assessment by the Director of Local Government will be made on the basis of the information provided by the Applicant). (Obligatory at application stage, where applicable)	<i>Applicable for Local Councils only</i>

21. A Contingency Plan signed by all partners, the Mayor (if applicable), the Executive Secretary (if applicable) and the Project Leader. (Obligatory at application stage)	<i>Compulsory</i>
22. A Gantt chart of activities in respect of the proposed project. (Obligatory at application stage)	<i>Compulsory</i>
23. An organigram detailing the organisational structure of the management team of the project signed by all partners, the Mayor (if applicable), the Executive Secretary (if applicable) and the Project Leader (Obligatory at application stage)	<i>Compulsory</i>
24. Bank Sanction letter in case of a Bank Loan being utilised (Required at application stage, if applicable)	<i>If applicable</i>
25. Signed, dated, and detailed Estimate by an architect in case of structural works (Bill of Quantities). The applicant must follow the procurement process as in Section 20, for re-imbursement by ARPA. (Obligatory at application stage, where applicable)	<i>Where Applicable</i>
26. Photographic evidence of the proposed investment, applicable on areas of physical intervention. (Obligatory at application stage)	<i>Compulsory</i>
27. A copy of the relevant permits (DNO, Full Development Permit or the application submitted to PA, TM Clearance and No Objection Form from the Lands Department) if applicable. (Required at application, if applicable)	<i>If applicable</i>
28. The Applicant must also submit site plans and approved drawings by the PA related to the proposed investment (Required at application stage, if applicable)	<i>Required only in case of structural works</i>
29. Dated declaration signed by a warranted architect that the enhancement to premises or the proposed use does not require a PA permit or a DNO (Required at application stage, if applicable)	<i>If applicable</i>
30. Annex 1 - Financial Bid Form. The applicant must follow the procurement process as in Section 20, for re-imbursement by ARPA. (Required at application stage, where the eligible investment is not listed on the Bill of Quantities issued by an architect)	<i>If applicable</i>
31. Annex 2 – VAT Declaration Form	<i>If applicable</i>

(Obligatory at application stage, if applicable)	
32. Annex 3 – Co-financing Form (Obligatory at application stage)	<i>Compulsory</i>
33. Annex 4 – De Minimis declaration for each partner, as clearance from state aid issues. (Obligatory at application stage)	<i>Compulsory</i>

Please Note:

Part or all of the information you provide will be held on a computer. This information will be used for the administration of applications and producing monitoring reports. The Department has the right to share information with other government departments, agencies and implementing bodies to enable them to prevent fraudulent applications or for detecting crime and to co-ordinate processing of complementary applications.

The information on the Application Form along with any attached documents will be treated as confidential throughout and after the project appraisal process. If your project is selected for an award of grant, to meet EU requirements for transparency regarding the use of EAFRD assistance, the Ministry for the Economy, European Funds and Lands and Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF) have the right to publish the name of the applicant, the amount of grant awarded and a brief summary of the project.

Annex 1 – Financial Bid Form

Breakdown of Costs

Financial Bid in terms of [insert the required expense/RfQ number]

Beneficiary Details:

[Name, Address & VAT number]

Contractor Information:

Full Name of Company: _____

Address of Company: _____

Email Address: _____

VAT number: _____

Quote Date: _____

Item No.	Item Description	Quantity	Unit Price Excluding VAT	Total Price excluding VAT	VAT Rate	Total Price Including VAT
1	(To be written by the Beneficiary – common for all bidders)					
2						

- Line Items to be quoted separately.
- The adjudication shall be carried out strictly in line with the items listed within the Financial Bid Form above
- Letter of acceptance is sent to the winning bidder following the adjudication.
- Letters of rejections are sent to the non-winning bidder following the adjudication.

Stamp of Bidder/

Name of person representing the company

Signature of Bidder

The Rural Development Programme for Malta 2014-2020



LEADER
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)
Co-financing rate: 75% EU Funds; 25% National Funds



*The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe Investing in Rural Areas*

Annex 2 - VAT Declaration Form

Part I – Declaration by Beneficiary

1.	Project Title	<div></div>
2.	Beneficiary Organisation	<div></div>
3. Beneficiary Organisation Address		<div></div>
4.	Name of Legal Representative	<div></div>
5.	VAT no. (if any)	<div></div>
6.	Brief Project Description	<div></div>

7. Does the organization have any sales on which VAT is charged or zero-rated sales (exempt with credit)?
- Yes ☐ No ☐

If **NO**, the organization has no right of recouping VAT from the VAT Department.

If **YES**, please provide a short description of the sales on which VAT is charged.

8. Please identify whether project is directly related to the sales on which VAT is charged or to sales which are zero rated (exempt with credit).

Yes ☐ No ☐ Partial ☐

If **YES**, for this activity, the organisation would be considered as a taxable person with an obligation for article 10 registration and would have the right of full deduction of input VAT attributable to the project in terms of article 22 of the VAT Act (Cap. 406, Laws of Malta), provided that the project would be entirely used for the purpose of such supplies.

If **NO**, for this activity, the organisation would either be considered as a taxable person doing exempt without credit supplies or a non-taxable legal person with activities outside the scope of VAT and for which registration under article 10 is not required and whereby there would be no right of input VAT deduction under the VAT Act.

If **PARTIAL**, for this activity, the organisation would be considered as a taxable person requiring article 10 registration and would have a partial right of input VAT deduction in terms of article 22 of the VAT Act.

I declare that the above-mentioned information is correct.

Signature and stamp of
Beneficiary Organisation

Name of Legal
Representative

Date

For official use only:

Part II – Declaration by VAT Division

Based on the information reported by the Beneficiary in his declaration the VAT status of the beneficiary organisation vis-a-vis the activities envisaged under Technical Assistance is considered as:

Taxable person (right of full deduction)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taxable person (partial right to deduct)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taxable person (exempt with credit)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taxable person (exempt without credit)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-taxable legal person (activities out of scope of VAT)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature and stamp of VAT
Department Representative

Name of VAT Department
Representative

Date

Annex 3 – Co-financing Form

To:

**Gozo Action Group Foundation
23, Triq G.P.F. Agius De Soldanis,
Victoria, VCT 1032**

Date

Dear Sir/Madam,

We refer to the application submitted by *(input name of applicant)* to apply for LEADER funds under the Rural Development Programme for Malta (2014-2020).

The application is being made for a total project cost of up to *(input total project cost)* of which 80% funding will be sought through the above-mentioned Programme. Resultantly an amount of *(input co-financing amount to be funded by the applicant any VAT amount if applicable)* will be directly funded by the applicant.

We confirm that *(input name of applicant)* has the available financial resource to meet its own co-financing obligation of *(input co-financing amount to be funded by the applicant any VAT amount if applicable)*.

Yours faithfully,

Insert name of Head/President of Organisation

Insert name of Financial Controller/Treasurer

Annex 4 – De Minimis Declaration

State Aid Declaration (*De Minimis*)

Measure 3 of the GAGF LEADER Programme – “Gozitan Attractions and Innovative Events for all Season” – Develop Gozo’s all-season tourism product offering

If the submitted application is approved, the project might benefit from *de minimis* State aid in line with *Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid, as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2020/972 of 2 July 2020 amending Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 as regards its prolongation [OJ L 215/3]*.

Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 allows a ‘single undertaking’ to receive an aggregate maximum amount of *de minimis* aid of EUR 200,000 under all *de minimis* aid measures, over a period of three ‘fiscal years’. This aggregate maximum threshold applies in principle to all economic sectors with the exception of a ‘single undertaking’ performing road freight transport for hire or reward for which a lower *de minimis* threshold of EUR 100,000 over any period of three ‘fiscal years’ applies. The agriculture and fisheries sectors are subject to different thresholds and criteria. For the purpose of this declaration the term ‘single undertaking’ shall have the meaning as established in *Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013*. Moreover ‘fiscal year’ means the fiscal year as used for tax purposes by the undertaking concerned.

This maximum threshold would include all State aid granted under this scheme and any other State aid measure granted under the *de minimis* rule. Any *de minimis* aid received in excess of the established threshold will have to be recovered, with interest, from the undertaking receiving the aid.

The following is an indicative list of the possible forms of State aid:

- Grant from public bodies
- Loans or loan guarantees at favourable rates
- Tax benefits
- Waiving or deferral of fees or interest normally due
- Marketing and advertising assistance
- Consultancy, training, and other support provided either free or at a reduced rate.
- Aid for investment in environmental projects or research and development assistance
- Purchase rent or lease of immovable property at less than market rate.

Potentially any assistance from a public body may constitute State aid. Should you have any doubts whether any public assistance received is *de minimis* aid, you should contact the agency or department from which the assistance was received in order to ascertain this.

Declaration

I declare that a comprehensive amount of *de minimis* aid received to date during the current fiscal year and the previous two years is:

Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021	Fiscal Year 2022	Total
€	€	€	€

A breakdown of the source, type, and amount of all *de minimis* aid received as well as that applied for from any State aid grantor, is presented overleaf.

Business Undertaking (Full Legal Name)

VAT Registration Number

Name and Surname (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Position in Establishment

Signature

Date

Detailed information concerning Applicable State Aid under the *De Minimis* Rule

(Note: Information should include both State aid received as well as applications for de minimis State aid still pending approval by potential grantors)

[illegible]