



Rural Broadband

At a Glance

TOTAL AREA INVESTMENT: **£350,000**

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE SUPPORTED: **3**

ANTICIPATED CALLS: **1**

CAPITAL GRANTS OF UP TO £100,000 AT 75% SUPPORT

Description of the Operation

This scheme will provide financial support (£2m) to fill the gap for rural dwellers who cannot avail of broadband and will help address the very rural 'not spots' that are not within the scope of any other government initiatives. Funding will be limited to small broadband infrastructure schemes that will involve innovative community led solutions for local access.

Type of Support

Support will be provided through grant aid. Under the following conditions, advance payments will be available for Community, Voluntary and Social Economy Enterprises who would not otherwise be able to access the capital to commence implementation of their project:

- Advances are subject to a 100% guarantee provided by a bank or other equivalent financial institution established in the Member State;
- Advances will not exceed 20% of the total amount of the aid to be granted to a beneficiary for a given operation

Eligible Costs

The following costs are eligible for support;

- a) The construction, acquisition, including through leasing, or improvement of immovable property;
- b) The purchase or lease-purchase of new machinery and equipment, up to the market value of the asset.

- c) General costs linked to the expenditure such as architects, engineers and consultation fees, fees relating to advice on environmental and economic sustainability, including feasibility studies, the acquisition of patent rights and licences, up to a total maximum of 10% of the eligible project grant amount. Feasibility studies are eligible expenditure even if there is no expenditure under points (a) and (b) as long as the activity was capable of being supported;

Beneficiaries

The following beneficiaries are eligible:

- Community Voluntary Sector (inc Social Economy Enterprises)
- Local Council
- Local Council /Private Partnership (where the Local Council is the grant recipient)
- Local Council / Community Voluntary Sector partnership (where the Local Council is the grant recipient)

Eligibility Conditions

The following eligibility conditions will apply to support for Rural Broadband:

- Creation of, and enabling access to broadband infrastructure including backhaul facilities and ground equipment (e.g. fixed, terrestrial wireless, satellite-based or combination of technologies).
- All projects must achieve a minimum speed of 5mb.
- Any area benefitting from investment will not be eligible for any other government scheme.

Amounts and Support Rates

Maximum grant up to £100,000 per project at 75% level of support to local authority, Community, Voluntary and Social Economy Enterprises. Promoter must contribute at least 5% own cash to the project costs.

State Aid

State aid for broadband infrastructure will comply with Article 52 of Regulation (EU) 651/2014 or with de-minimis Regulation (EU) 1407/2013.

A State Aid checklist must be completed for each application received under this Scheme.

Please note: This information may be subject to change as the programme progresses.