

## Commonly Asked Questions



### What is LEADER cooperation?

Cooperation is a partnership between two or more applicants. There is no defined upper limit on the number of partners a project may have but the project must be manageable.

### Who can be a partner?

Applicants may cooperate with partners from anywhere. Partners from within the EU may be located in both rural and urban areas (subject to local rules). Partners outside the EU must be located in rural areas. They must be a group of local public and private partners in a rural territory that is implementing a strategy akin to a Local Development Strategy.

### Can you cooperate with a LAG from your own region or Member State?

Yes, partnering with other LAGs from Scotland is referred to as 'Inter-territorial Scotland Cooperation'. You can also cooperate with LAGs from other Member States, this is referred to as 'Transnational Cooperation'. Cooperation between LAGs from different regions of the UK is referred to as 'Inter-territorial UK Cooperation' as it takes place between regions of one Member State.

### What are the benefits of a cooperation project?

There are many potential benefits from participating in cooperation projects. Cooperation is a way to:-

- Widen local views in order to improve local strategies;
- Get access to information and new ideas;
- Learn from other regions or countries;
- Stimulate and support innovation; and
- Acquire skills and means to improve delivery

### How do you apply for a cooperation project?

The application process used is determined by each Member State. For Inter-territorial Scotland a single application is submitted, supported by the LAG Funding Agreement between Scottish LAG Partners.

For Transnational and Inter-territorial UK projects, each applicant must submit an application for funding towards their element of the overall project budget. This will include any costs that are directly attributable to their area, as well as any agreed contribution to common costs (i.e. those costs which are shared out amongst the partnership e.g. cost of professional advice, publications, web development, etc.).

### What is the currency of a cooperation project?

The budget for each partner LAG must be stated in their national currency. This means that applicants in Scotland must calculate their budgets in Pounds Sterling (£).

### What kind of project could you undertake?

Any project which fits within the Priorities/Measures/Schemes of your own Local Development Strategy and meets the eligibility criteria of the EU Regulations and National operating rules.



### **What help is available/where can I get help to develop a project idea?**

The Network Support Unit (NSU) have a number of tools and services available to help applicants who wish to develop a cooperation project. Information relating to NSU Support, including the designated contact points, is contained in this toolkit. The Scottish Government LEADER team may also offer technical support to applicants to help them through the process.

The [European Network for Rural Development \(ENRD\) website](#) contains useful resources on LEADER and cooperation as well as organising and promoting a range of seminars and networking events which could help support applicants in preparing for and undertaking a cooperation project.

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### **How do you go about finding possible project partners?**

Applicants often find potential partners through their engagement in networking activity organised through the national rural network structures or develop partnerships based on existing personal contact with LAGs from other areas.

Where this is not possible, an online Partner Search Request facility is available from the Scottish Rural Network. The SRN will list your project idea on their website and include it in mailings or newsletters. They will also proactively identify and seek suitable potential partner areas/applicants based on the information provided within the Partner Search Request.

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### **Is networking part of cooperation?**

A key element of the animation activity of the LAG is networking. This provides the opportunity for LAGs to identify and develop links with other LAGs and organisations. Networking is considered as the starting point for cooperation activity. Costs incurred by LAGs involved in networking activity could include for example, travel and accommodation. These costs are payable from the LAGs Animation budget.

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### **Is there specific grant assistance to help develop a project?**

Preparatory Technical Support funding is available to support applicants to develop project ideas and partnerships to the point where they can submit a full project application. Preparatory support must precede the cooperation project

The [Local Action Group Guidance](#) has more information on the maximum amount available but support has an intervention rate of 100%. As in all circumstances, reasonableness of costs must be demonstrated. Please see the relevant section of this guidance and that of the [applicant guidance](#).



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### **Is Preparatory Technical Support mandatory?**

Applicants are not obliged to make use of all or any of the preparatory support available in developing their cooperation projects. If the project details are sufficiently worked up and a project partnership is already in place then an applicant can move straight to the submission of a full project application.

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### **What is the anticipated timescale for a cooperation project?**

It is not unreasonable to expect, from initial networking/contact through to the completion of a Preparatory Technical Support project, a period of six months.

A full cooperation project can take several months to develop and depending on the nature and complexity of the project, delivery could typically fall into the range of 18-24 months.