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Factsheet for case **IE-2020-18/796**

COVID-19 Online Retail Scheme

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Country	Ireland, applies nationwide
Time period	Open ended, started on 26 April 2020
Type	Legislation or other statutory regulation
Category	Supporting businesses to stay afloat – Access to finance
Case created	26 April 2020

Background Information

The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) has proposed this Scheme in response to the Covid-19 crisis and the urgent need for retail companies to achieve a step change in online capability.

This is a Competitive Fund which will be administered by Enterprise Ireland on behalf of DBEI with a total fund size of €2m.

Applications for funding will be invited through a public Call for submission of projects. This Call open and close dates to be confirmed.

The purpose of this fund is to enable Irish-owned retailers to enhance their digital capability and to develop a more competitive online offer, that will enable an increase in their customer base and build a more resilient business in the domestic and global marketplace both online and offline.

Successful applicants will be awarded funding to support a maximum of 80% of the project eligible costs with a maximum grant of €40,000.

Typical elements involved in developing a sophisticated and transactional online presence include research, consultancy costs for strategy development, implementation and training.

Content of measure

The applicant must be an Irish-owned retail enterprise that had 10 or more employees on or before 29 February 2020 and has the potential to sustain or create jobs, generate growth in online transactions and with an ambition to internationalise their business in future. An application must be submitted in the name of a company registered with the Companies Registration Office and incorporated in the Republic of Ireland at the time of application. The business must also:

have an existing online presence (e.g. website or social media);

have a retail outlet and derive the majority of revenue from the retail outlet(s);

Must employ at least 10 employees in the Republic of Ireland (on a full-time equivalent basis on or before 29 February 2020);

Previous applicants of the Online Retail Scheme who were unsuccessful will be eligible to re-apply with a modified proposal under this Call. Successful applicants in previous calls are eligible to re-apply under this call, once they have fully completed the project funded, fully claimed all eligible costs and propose a clearly different project to that undertaken under previous calls.

Typical elements involved in developing a sophisticated and transactional online presence include:

Research:

In-depth analysis of the company's current and potential online presence and capabilities, target audience and brand. This research should help the applicant make informed decisions about e.g. optimisation of online marketing channels, web functionality, payment systems specification, catalogue presentation, supply chain management, consolidated inventory systems, order fulfilment and consumer experience.

Strategy development:

Development of a written digital strategy and a roadmap for implementation including resource and business process considerations;

Identifying how the company's value proposition should be demonstrated online, what aspects should be emphasised and how best to present this to online customers;

Ensuring that the company's online presence is being fully utilised / optimised to fulfil its overall potential, supporting the overall business strategy;

Consideration of omnichannel offering (including marketplaces and social media).

Implementation:

Optimising the company's online presence to ensure domestic and international visibility (e.g. web enhancement and localisation, associated business process enhancements, search engine optimisation etc.);

Enhancing related "back end" systems (e.g. product presentation, supply chain management, systems integration to improve consumer experience etc.).

Costs

Successful applicants will be awarded funding to support a maximum of 80% of the project costs.

The minimum grant amount payable is €10,000 under this Scheme.

Therefore, applications which do not propose company expenditure on the project of a minimum of €12,500 will be considered ineligible (the grant will reimburse up to 80% of eligible expenditure as set out below);

All eligible costs are required to be directly related to the implementation of the work programme.

Eligible costs include:

Salary costs of a senior project champion (manager level or above) in the applicant company to work with an external service provider on this project. The costs to support the salary of the project champion must not exceed the external service provider costs. A maximum of 1 internal champion per company is eligible for salary costs;

Fees of established external service provider(s) to develop a digital strategy;

Fees of established external service provider(s) to further develop / enhance the company's transactional website or online presence. The grant must be used to introduce additional functionality; and

Training Course fees are not eligible, however in-house training provided by an external provider to enable a company develop and maintain a robust online retail operation are eligible. This could include training for CMS, eMarketing, catalogue management, e-commerce systems, SEO, etc.

Use of measure

No information

Actors, target groups and funding

Actors	Target groups	Funding
National government Public support service providers	Sector specific set of companies Companies providing essential services SMEs	National funds

Social partners

Role of social partners	No involvement
Form of involvement	No involvement

No involvement

Sectors and occupations

This case is sector-specific (only private sector).

Economic area	Sector (NACE level 2)
G - Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair Of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles	G45 Wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles

This case is not occupation-specific.

Sources

- 26 April 2020: Enterprise Ireland (www.enterprise-ireland.com)