



# Northern Ireland Overseas Engagement Programme

2024 Phase II

**GUIDELINES**

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## 1. Executive Summary

### 1.1 Background & Context Setting

One of the key priorities of Tourism Ireland (TI) is to strategically collaborate with industry partners to deliver its vision to:

*“Increase the value of overseas tourism to the island of Ireland, sustainably supporting economies, communities, and the environment by inspiring visitors and strengthening strategic partnerships”.*

Ireland, along with Tourism Northern Ireland (TNI), has built strong relationships with industry partners throughout Northern Ireland (NI), and currently provides a range of events in overseas markets – fairs, workshops, shows, sales missions – to assist NI industry to promote their products/services directly to both consumers and the travel trade overseas.

TI recognises the skills and expertise of NI industry partners but is also aware that they may not have the financial resources to avail of the opportunities provided by these range of events.

This programme aims to address that by:

- a. Enabling NI industry to fully engage with Tourism Ireland’s overseas marketing programme.
- b. Facilitating opportunities for NI tourism activity and experience providers to engage with Tourism Ireland led platforms overseas on a transparent and equitable basis.

### 1.2 Programme Objectives

The objectives of the **Programme** are:

- To support the development of Northern Ireland tourism businesses by enabling greater access to key overseas markets.
- To facilitate suitably qualified (\*) Northern Ireland industry to undertake pro-active sales focused activity overseas.
- To enable industry to augment Tourism Ireland’s marketing activities in target markets with sales activity that is focussed on retaining &/or closing the sale for Northern Ireland.
- To make it easier for overseas trade partners and consumers to access and buy Northern Ireland product as broadly and widely as possible.
- To fulfil the primary objective for the sector which is to maximise revenue from overseas tourism through Northern Ireland achieving its full potential as a destination for inbound visitors.
- To ensure that Northern Ireland’s industry has sufficient marketing support to gain competitive stand out in what will be an increasingly competitive global market.

*\*This opportunity is open to established Northern Ireland activity, attractions, experience tourism businesses and accommodation providers. Priority consideration will be given to participants in the Embrace a Giant Spirit Experience Portfolio, who also meet the additional criteria as detailed in the programme parameters. Applicant businesses should be equipped to contract with tour operators and able to offer net/commissionable trade rates, with sufficient capacity to facilitate groups or FIT visitors. Applicants should also be focused on international markets with appropriate development/marketing plans in place.*

This programme is not open to members of the ITOA, for whom an existing programme is already in place. Furthermore, it is not open to Destination Management Organisations, Local Authorities, or other publicly funded agencies/authorities. Tourism Councils may be considered on a case-by-case basis where they are recruited by Tourism NI to attend a TI led event, and they are promoting a saleable activity/ attraction or experience.

Funding for this programme is made available under the **Market Economy Operator Principle** and is strictly based on a co-operative partnership whereby the applicant is contributing their time, resources, and expertise in addition to a proportion of the costs incurred of the activity.

## 2. Programme Parameters

### 2.1. Key Information

- a. This programme supports the attendance of one representative per Northern Ireland tourism business at a Tourism Ireland led overseas event, where the industry partner is recruited via Tourism NI.
- b. Up to 50% of total approved costs will be reimbursed by Tourism Ireland (TI) i.e., industry will be required to pay 50%.
- c. Minimum amount of funding per application is £250 i.e. TI will not fund any activity that costs less than £500 with TI paying 50% = £250.
- d. Maximum amount of funding by TI per application = £5,000 i.e., TI will fund up to 50% or £2,500 whichever is the lower.
- e. Up to 3 fully completed applications may be considered per business per calendar year.
- f. One application per business may be submitted.
- g. Three applications per hotel or hotel group is eligible for consideration. An application may not be submitted on behalf of multiple properties of the same hotel or hotel group.
- h. One event per application is eligible for consideration. Application approval does not guarantee selection to attend the event, and approval of recruitment must be confirmed by Tourism NI to qualify for support. If the industry partner is not recruited to attend the preferred show/ event and is selected for an alternative event, an updated application can be submitted for consideration.
- i. Applications must be approved in advance of activity taking place, see 'Key Steps and Guidelines' for timelines. Fully completed applications should be received at least 4 weeks in advance of activity commencing.
- j. Activity undertaken prior to submission of application will not be considered eligible.
- k. One representative per business may be funded to undertake each activity plan. Two representatives cannot be funded to undertake the same activity.
- l. This programme is for the leisure market only and is not open for Business Tourism or MICE focussed activities.
- m. Suitably qualified businesses may apply from **Monday June 24<sup>th</sup>**, subject to funds remaining.
- n. Approved activities may take place from **Monday July 1<sup>st</sup>** and should be fully completed by **December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.
- o. Payments will be made retrospectively upon receipt of completed Post Activity Claim Form and required back-up documentation, including all receipts.
- p. Application funding approval will be made available on a first come, first served basis subject to all criteria being met.
- q. An unreceipted fixed daily "**per diem**" rate will be allowed per complete 24 hours in market to cover the cost of food and accommodation while in market.
- r. If the event fee includes accommodation, then there is no per diem in place.
- s. See **Appendix I** for per diem rates for eligible markets. All other approved costs must be substantiated with 3rd party receipts.

### 2.2. Eligible Programme Activities

This opportunity is open to established Northern Ireland activity and experience tourism businesses. Priority consideration will be given to participants in the Embrace a Giant Spirit Experience Portfolio who also meet the additional criteria as detailed in section 3. This phase of the NIOEP Programme is

also open to accommodation providers who are recruited by Tourism NI to attend Tourism Ireland led events in H2 2024.

Applicant businesses should be equipped to contract with tour operators and able to offer net/commissionable trade rates, with sufficient capacity to facilitate groups or FIT visitors. Applicants should also be focused on international markets with appropriate development/marketing plans in place.

This programme is for the leisure tourism market activities and is not open to Business Tourism and MICE including Meeting, Incentive, Conference and Exhibitions. The following categories of in-market activity are eligible:

- a. Participation at overseas in-person leisure B2B or consumer platforms including shows/ events/ sales missions led by Tourism Ireland, and where there is an existing recruitment process in place with Tourism NI.
- b. All funded activities must be exclusively focussed on the marketing/promotion of Northern Ireland &/or Ireland and must not include any other destination.

## **2.3. Eligible Programme Costs**

Eligible Activities/ Costs which may be included in the application.

- Event Participation Fees for attendance at Tourism Ireland led overseas shows/events/ sales missions where the industry partner has been recruited to attend by Tourism NI.
- Return travel (basic economy class fare only) from the island of Ireland to market (See Appendix II).
- Per Diem – fixed rates which cover accommodation and meals per complete 24hr period in market (See Appendix I).

## **3. Criteria for Eligibility**

- A. This opportunity is open to established Northern Ireland attraction, activity, experience tourism businesses and accommodation providers who are recruited by Tourism NI to attend TI led events. Priority consideration will be given to participants in the Embrace a Giant Spirit Experience Portfolio who also meet the additional criteria as detailed.
- B. Offer Bookable/ Saleable Experiences that are available online to book directly. Applicant businesses should be equipped to contract with tour operators and able to offer net/commissionable trade rates, with sufficient capacity to facilitate groups or FIT visitors. Applicants should also be focused on international markets with appropriate development/marketing plans in place.
- C. Priority for support will be given to industry partners who have not availed of IMAP support and Tourism Ireland industry support schemes since 2021.

- D. This programme is not open representative/ cluster groups, members of the ITOA, Destination Management Organisations, Local Authorities, and/ or other publicly funded agencies/authorities. Tourism Councils may be considered on a case-by-case basis where are recruited by Tourism NI to attend a TI led event, and they are promoting a saleable activity/ attraction or experience.

If you are unsure whether your business qualifies or not, please email [EventSupport@tourismireland.com](mailto:EventSupport@tourismireland.com) prior to applying.

### 3.1. Application Information

- All applications must meet business and activity eligibility criteria outlined above and applicants are advised **not to submit** their applications until they have carefully read and understood the relevant Guidelines.
- Fully completed applications which qualify as eligible will be approved on a first come first served basis, subject to funding being available. Applicants are therefore strongly advised to complete and submit their applications promptly.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered eligible. Applicants will be advised if their application is incomplete and may submit a new/ updated, fully complete application, however fully complete and eligible applications will be given priority for approval.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all costs included in their application are correct and based on market costs.
- If the programme fund is not fully utilised, all qualifying applications will be funded.
- Industry may submit one application for one show/ event/ sales mission.
- Activity undertaken prior to submission of application will not be considered eligible.
- All expected costs must be included in the application form. Expenses submitted which were not included in the application may not be considered eligible.

### 3.2. Post Activity Claims and Evaluation

Upon completion of your approved activity and to draw down your payments, you will be required to complete and submit a **Post Activity Claim Form and Required Back-Up Documentation**. This PAC Form and Evaluation will be emailed directly to you on approval of your application and must be returned within two weeks of the conclusion of your activity. It will require the inclusion of the following information and back up documentation:

1. Post Activity Claim Form supported by 3<sup>rd</sup> party receipts for approved costs.

## 4. Key Steps and Timelines

### Applications:

- a) Suitably qualified businesses may apply from **Monday June 24<sup>th</sup>**, subject to funds remaining.
- b) Approved activities may take place from **Monday July 1<sup>st</sup>** and should be fully completed by **December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.

- c) Businesses which meet the eligibility criteria set out above should complete the Application Form.
- d) Please check your application carefully against all the eligibility criteria set out in these Guidelines before submitting it. See Appendix II for Examples of Eligible/Ineligible costs.
- e) Submit your completed application to [eventsupport@tourismireland.com](mailto:eventsupport@tourismireland.com).
- f) Fully completed applications will be treated strictly on a first come, first served basis, and must meet the eligibility criteria.
- g) Tourism Ireland will respond to your application within 14 days of receipt.
- h) To allow sufficient time for processing, completed applications must be submitted no later than 4 weeks prior to the intended activity taking place.

#### **Approval:**

- i) If the application is approved, you will receive confirmation in writing together with a copy of the Post Activity Claim Form.
- j) Once written approval is received from Tourism Ireland, applicants may proceed with activities. Applicants are encouraged to book their flights in a timely manner once approval is confirmed, to secure best rates.

#### **Ineligible/Incomplete Applications**

- k) If your application is found by Tourism Ireland to be ineligible or incomplete, you will be informed in writing and may submit a new/ updated application, which may be approved subject to meeting eligibility criteria and funds remaining.

#### **Amendments and Cancellations**

- l) Any change to an approved activity plan arising from unforeseen circumstances must be notified to Tourism Ireland in writing, and an updated application form submitted to [eventsupport@tourismireland.com](mailto:eventsupport@tourismireland.com) for approval, along with an explanation for the change.
- m) Tourism Ireland reserves the right to approve amendments and changes to activity based on funding available.
- n) Applicants must have received prior written approval from Tourism Ireland in advance of making any new bookings.
- o) In the event of cancellation and where alternative activity has not been identified, applicants are asked to notify the team in writing to [eventsupport@tourismireland.com](mailto:eventsupport@tourismireland.com) that the approved activity will not proceed.
- p) Amended and approved activity must be completed by the activity deadline of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

#### **Claims**

- q) On completion of the approved activity plan, you should fill in the Post Activity Claim Form in full and attach the required back up information (including copies of clear and eligible receipts



for approved costs incurred) and submit to [eventsupport@tourismireland.com](mailto:eventsupport@tourismireland.com). NB only receipted costs will be considered.

- r) Claims must be completed in full and submitted on the approved Post Activity Claim (PAC) form. Incomplete or incorrect claims will be returned to the participant to amend and clarify any errors or omissions.
- s) The Post Activity Claim Form must be submitted within 14 days of completion of your approved activities.
- t) Only cost items which were approved in the Application may be claimed on the Claim Form.
- u) Tourism Ireland will reimburse approved costs within 30 days of receiving your fully completed PAC Form.
- v) Only expense claims which were included in the approved application should be included in the PAC form.
- w) Any item being claimed for in a currency other than that of the claim, should be translated into the claim currency at the average daily rate prevailing on the date the expense was incurred. Rates are available at [www.OANDA.com](http://www.OANDA.com)
- x) Tourism Ireland reserves the right to request bank receipts to verify the actual amount of costs incurred in FX transactions.

## 5. Tourism Ireland Contacts

For all further information or if you have questions regarding activities, eligibility or any other aspects of the programme please email [eventsupport@tourismireland.com](mailto:eventsupport@tourismireland.com).

## 6. Data Protection

Suitably qualified Industry selected under this Programme shall (and shall procure that any member of its group shall) collect any necessary permission, provide any necessary notice and do all such other things as are required under the Data Protection Legislation\*\* in order for it to disclose Personal Data\*\* to Tourism Ireland for the purposes described.

**\*\* See Appendix III for definitions**

## 7. Terms and Conditions

- a) Applicants must:
  - 1. Explicitly agree to all terms and conditions outlined in this document.
  - 2. Confirm that none of the activities outlined in the application for funding are being funded by other sources of public money, e.g., Tourism Northern Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland market office, local authorities, or other publicly funded agencies/authorities.
  - 3. Agree that no funding received will be used to off-set capital or human resource costs.
  - 4. Agree to submit post-activity reports and participate in any review process introduced by Tourism Ireland.
- b) Suitably qualified Industry selected under this Programme shall be considered to be the Data Controller\*\* in respect of Personal Data it processes as a result of engaging in funded activities

under this scheme and shall comply with its obligations as a Data Controller\*\* under the Data Protection Legislation\*\*.

- c) Funded activity must focus on Northern Ireland/island of Ireland business retention or new business.
- d) Applicants must directly offer saleable experiences to be eligible for the programme.
- e) Activity must be undertaken by the industry partner and cannot be undertaken by General Sales Agents/ Cluster Groups or other representative companies.
- f) The onus is on applicants to demonstrate that their activity and costs meet the criteria and objectives of the fund through the application process. Applicants should ensure that any costs included in their application are realistic, based on market costs.
- g) Prior to any activity taking place, applications must be:
  - 1. completed diligently and in full.
  - 2. signed by an authorised officer of the business applying.
  - 3. approved in writing by Tourism Ireland
- h) All information received by Tourism Ireland in applications and throughout the programme will be treated in confidence with regard to public disclosure, however Tourism Ireland reserves the right to share information with Tourism Northern Ireland/& or Fáilte Ireland to ensure no activities are double funded.
- i) Tourism Ireland shall process the Personal Data\*\* it receives as part of this engagement, as reasonably required to meet its legal or regulatory obligations or for its other reasonable business purposes (including quality control and administration), and may disclose Personal Data to any third parties including its subcontractors, regulators and any party based in any jurisdiction including a jurisdiction outside the European Economic Area provided that such disclosure is reasonably required in connection with such purposes and is at all times in compliance with applicable Data Protection Legislation\*\*
- j) For more information on how Tourism Ireland handles your personal data, please see our privacy policy; <https://www.tourismirelandindustryopportunities.com/privacy-policy>
- k) \*\* See Appendix III for definitions relating to data protection.
- l) Any potential change to approved activity MUST be agreed in writing with Tourism Ireland prior to the amended activity being confirmed.
- m) Activities are approved subject to any travel restrictions which apply at the date of the activity, being fully complied with.
- n) In the event of an approved activity being cancelled, funding is not transferrable to another activity without the prior written consent of Tourism Ireland.
- o) Applicants are advised to ensure they have the requisite travel insurance cover in place, as in the event of cancellation, costs of cancelled travel are not considered eligible.
- p) Applications received after the deadline will not be considered eligible.
- q) Where an activity is approved for support, all payments by Tourism Ireland will be made after the activity has taken place and upon submission of receipts and support documents as set out in the **Post Activity Claim Form**, which will be emailed directly to you on approval of your application.
- r) All expense costs must be detailed and approved in the application and be supported by 3rd party invoices/receipts. Tourism Ireland will not refund costs which were not approved at the application stage.

- s) Any item being claimed for in a currency other than that of the claim, should be translated into the claim currency at the average daily rate prevailing on the date the expense was incurred. Rates are available at [www.OANDA.com](http://www.OANDA.com)
- t) Tourism Ireland reserves the right to request bank receipts to verify the actual amount of costs incurred in FX transactions.
- u) All final claim submissions and accompanying receipts for all activities must be submitted in full within 2 weeks of the completion date of the activity unless explicitly agreed in writing with Tourism Ireland.
- v) Where an overpayment occurs, Tourism Ireland will issue an invoice to individual members with a 30-day remittance term.
- w) For audit purposes only, participants will be required to supply securely the list of contacts met with on sales calls, including name and email address and/or contact phone number.
- x) All decisions are final, and Tourism Ireland reserves the right to terminate the programme or amend terms and conditions at any time.

## 8. Appendices

### Appendix I – Per Diem Table

The following “Per Diem” rates apply per complete period of 24 hours spent out of Ireland, to cover the cost of accommodation and meals on an unreceipted basis, necessary to carry out your approved activity. Where the participation fee includes accommodation costs, or where no accommodation costs are incurred, per diems are not eligible for refund.

By submitting your PAC Claim form, you are confirming that you have spent at least the amount per day outlined below in the table. Tourism Ireland reserves the right to request receipts to demonstrate that the full time required, and amount has been spent in market. Participants found to have claimed for more than spent and/ or time not actually spent away lose the right to any reimbursement of the per diem amounts.

Location	Rate (Euros)	Rate (GBPs)
Great Britain/ Australia/New Zealand	250.00	215.00
Switzerland	290.00	250.00
Canada	200.00	170.00
US/ Germany/ France/ Spain/ Italy/ Netherlands/ Belgium/ Nordics/ Austria	240.00	205.00

### Appendix II – Eligible and Ineligible Activities/Costs

#### Eligible Activities/ Costs which may be included in your application.

- Attendance at Tourism Ireland led overseas shows/events/ sales missions where the industry partner has been recruited to attend by Tourism NI.
- Event registration/ participation fee for one representative per business per activity plan.
- Return travel necessary to travel from the island of Ireland to market (basic economy class fare only) including flights, ferries. Trains/ coaches that are a substantial part of the journey and are required to travel to the at event destination may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Per Diem – fixed rates which cover accommodation and meals per complete 24hr period in market.

#### Examples of Ineligible Activities/ Costs

- Attendance at virtual trade shows and virtual sales calls and webinars.
- Taxi costs, parking fees and any other ad hoc travel related costs are not eligible.
- Production and transport of print and promotional materials e.g., brochures, pop-ups, flyers, cards etc.

- Where hotel stays are included in the event fee, or accommodation is not incurred, subsistence (per diems) are not an eligible cost.
- PR activities
- Event Hosting, Catering and Entertainment costs
- Show/ Event stand build and maintenance costs
- Costs for a second representative to attend Shows/ Events/ Sales Calls
- Capital costs.
- Business Tourism focussed activities aimed at Association Conferences
- License fees e.g., software and website hosting
- Office supplies and stationery
- Accountancy and internal audit fees
- Business insurance
- Travel insurance
- Visas
- PCR or Antigen/Lateral Flow Test costs
- Office rental costs
- Office utilities (i.e., broadband, electricity, gas, telephone, and water)
- Voice & data roaming costs
- Business or trade association membership fees
- Any need for professional advisory support (i.e., HR, Legal etc.) to obtain specialist knowledge to aid business recovery and transformation.
- Fees for General Sales Agents/Consultants (activity must be undertaken by the industry partner and not contracted to GSAs or other representative companies)
- Salary Costs
- Day-to-day administrative expenses
- Taxes
- Gifts and prizes
- Hospitality
- Incidental hotel charges
- Travel and related costs within the island of Ireland (e.g., airport transfers, parking, mileage etc.)
- Charges and penalties for cancelled or missed activity and/or costs of activity which has not taken place.

If you are unsure whether your activity qualifies or not, please email:  
[eventsupport@tourismireland.com](mailto:eventsupport@tourismireland.com) prior to submitting your application

## Appendix III - Data Protection Definitions

**Data Controller:** has the meaning given to such term in Data Protection Legislation.

**Data Protection Legislation:** means the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018, GDPR and, any other applicable law or regulation relating to the Processing of Personal Data and to privacy including the E-Privacy Directive 2002/58/EC and the European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Privacy and Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011 (“E-Privacy Regulations”), as such legislation shall be supplemented, amended, revised, or replaced from time to time.

**GDPR:** General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

**Personal Data:** has the meaning set out in Data Protection Legislation

**Processing:** has the meaning given to such term in Data Protection Legislation, and **Process** and **Processed** shall be interpreted accordingly.