



SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENT & ACCESSIBILITY GRANT SCHEME 2021

The purpose of the scheme is to foster good design practices which respect the character of the streetscape in terms of detailing materials and finishes. The encouragement of high quality commercial frontages which use a variety of architectural styles which need not duplicate established architectural approaches but should conform to the overall aesthetic, appearance, character and heritage of the urban environment.



Laois County Council

Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise, Co Laois

c2connect
Laois

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Who can apply?

Business owners/leasees of independently owned shops which front onto streets and are located in a town centre/village centre area. Chain store exemptions may apply. Applications may be made by the lessee of the property but must submit the owner's written consent.

Where can I get additional information on the scheme?

Proposed works and specifications can be discussed with The Business Support Unit of Laois County Council prior to the commencement of works. Full eligibility criteria are available on www.laois.ie

Do I need planning permission?

The majority of the actions allowed under the scheme may not need planning permission however you should consult the Business Support Unit to clarify. Applicants may make an application for the grant in advance of obtaining planning permission (if required). Where planning permission is required approved works cannot start until final grant of planning permission is received.

What costs will the grant cover?

The grant will only be paid for works approved in the '**Letter of Approval**' from the Local Authority. There is no obligation upon the Local Authority to increase the grant if additional work is undertaken outside the terms of the original grant approved and assistance cannot be given in retrospect for works carried out prior to approval for the scheme. The grant shall not exceed 50% of the overall cost and is subject to a maximum grant allocation of €750. The grant will be increased to a maximum of €1,000 where applications include accessibility works (e.g. accessibility ramps and railings).

When do I get paid?

The grant will be payable after completion and final inspection by a relevant Council official and when all documentation has been received and the terms and conditions are complied with.

Can I reapply if I have previously been approved for funding?

Businesses who have been approved for the scheme in the previous 3 year period cannot reapply.

Are there other financial terms to comply with before I get paid?

Costs must be verified by the submission of receipts/invoices prior to payment. In addition, the applicant must either have paid rates in full or be in compliance with a payment plan/agreement regarding rates. Properties must be commercially rated.

What happens if the fund is oversubscribed?

In the event the scheme becomes oversubscribed, preference will be given to proposals that in the Council's view will most improve the visual appearance of the town/village setting.

Assessment

Applications will be assessed by the Business Support Unit with considerations being given to proposed design, materials and overall impact in line with the schemes eligibility criteria. The premises will be inspected by an official from the Planning Department prior to approval being issued.

Full terms and conditions of the scheme are available here:

<https://laois.ie/departments/business-and-economic-development/shopfront-grants-scheme/>

SHOP FRONT APPLICATION FORM 2021

Complete applications can be returned to:

The Business Support Unit
Laois County Council
Áras an Chontae,
JFL Avenue,
Portlaoise
Co. Laois

Contact Business Support
Phone
057 866 4000
Email
businesssupport@laoiscoco.ie

Please read the terms & Conditions before completing the grant application form

Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Address of Applicant:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Is the premises an independently owned ground-floor retail or commercial premises, fronting onto the public road and zoned Town Centre / Village Centre: **YES / NO (please circle)**.

Is the property registered on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS): **YES / NO (please circle)**.

Est, Start Date: _____ Completion Date: _____

Planning application reference (if applicable):

Please attach a detailed breakdown and a written quotation for the **total estimated cost of the project** with your application.

Declaration

I/We declare that the information provided is true and correct.

I/We note that the Council reserves the right to publish photographs of improved shopfronts in promotional material.

I/We note the Freedom of Information Act applies to all records held by Laois County Council.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

