

# FAQ's for the Strategic Ireland Based Inbound Agents Tourism Business Continuity Scheme 2022

**Note: This is a living document which means that as frequently asked questions are received on the Scheme, they will be added to this document, and it will evolve.**

## 1. Who is the Scheme for?

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Fáilte Ireland (National Tourism Development Authority) have developed, and will be implementing, an Ireland Based Inbound Agents Business Continuity Scheme to assist Republic of Ireland based Inbound Tour Operators, Golf Tour

Operators, Destination Management Companies (DMCs) and Professional Conference Organisers (PCOs) who package, sell and market Ireland's tourism product overseas and have suffered significant losses as a result of COVID-19.

## 2. Who Can Apply?

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The Scheme is open to applicants meeting the below criteria, and it is important that all applicants check the definition and eligibility criteria before applying. Eligibility does not mean an entitlement to funding, which is at the sole discretion of Fáilte Ireland, rather it means eligibility to make an application for grant funding.

**The applicant must be an Eligible Irish Based Inbound Agent, i.e.:**

Operate as Republic of Ireland based inbound tour operator, DMC or PCO who package, sell and market Ireland's tourism product overseas; and be a member of, or meets the criteria to become a member of, any of the following:

- The Incoming Tour Operator Association (ITOA).
- Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers (AIPCO) – full or associate membership.
- Irish Golf Tour Operator Association (IGTOA).
- Fáilte Ireland approved Destination Management Company (DMC).
- Fáilte Ireland approved Professional Conference Organiser (PCO);  
**or**
- The applicant has participated, in a minimum of two international sales platforms during the period (2018-2020) via the Fáilte Ireland portal

### 3. Who should I contact for general queries on this Scheme?

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Please direct all queries to the Fáilte Ireland Customer Support Team by emailing [customersupport@failteireland.ie](mailto:customersupport@failteireland.ie)

### 4. How will the grant amount be determined?

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**Grants for successful applicants will be based on the following calculations:**

- The grant amount per applicant will be based on the annual eligible tourism turnover from 2019.
  - The grant amount is calculated as 5% of the 2019 eligible tourism turnover figure (subject to the maximum grant as set out below, and
- European Union (EU) State Aid rules).
- The minimum grant amount per applicant is €2,500 based on a minimum eligible tourism turnover of €50,000.
  - For applicants / groups with eligible tourism turnover of €16 million and above, €800,000 is the maximum award payable out under this Scheme, subject to EU State Aid rules.

### 5. What is considered eligible and ineligible turnover?

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Applicants will be asked to declare their eligible tourism turnover figure for 2019 and 2021. Only turnover generated from the delivery of inbound agent services related business activities within the Republic of Ireland will be eligible for inclusion in an applicant's eligible tourism turnover figure.

Ineligible turnover includes (but is not limited to): Revenue generated from outbound activities, revenue generated from non tourism activity, any revenue generated from carrier receipts. Please see guidelines for further detail.

### 6. If a business received the Fáilte Ireland Adaptation Grant are they eligible for the Strategic Tourism Transport Business Continuity Scheme?

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Yes, businesses in receipt of the Adaptation Grant may be eligible should they meet the full eligibility criteria set out in the Guidelines.

They must declare whether they are in receipt of the Adaptation Grant along with any other funding under the COVID-19 EU State Aid Temporary Framework.

## 7. What is EU State Aid and how will it affect my grant?

EU State Aid is a term that refers to forms of public assistance, using taxpayer-funded resources, given to undertakings on a discretionary basis, with the potential to distort competition and affect trade between member states of the European Union.

The Scheme is being funded under the COVID-19 EU State Aid Temporary Framework. There is a threshold of funding a legal entity can receive under this framework and grants will be capped in accordance. Other sources of funding under the COVID-19 EU State Aid Temporary Framework must be declared upon application and will be taken into account when calculating a successful applicant's final grant amount.

**Applicants must declare if they received any of the following forms of EU State Aid:**

	Title	Granting Authority
1	Repayable Advances Scheme Ireland	Enterprise Ireland & IDA Ireland
2	Sustaining Enterprise Scheme	Enterprise Ireland & IDA Ireland
3	Covid 19 Products Scheme	IDA Ireland
4	Covid 19- Credit Guarantee Scheme	Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland
5	Irish Restart Grant	Enterprise Ireland
6	COVID 19 Adaptation Fund for the Re-Opening of Tourism and Hospitality businesses	Fáilte Ireland
7	Beef Finishers Payment	The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
8	Live Performance Scheme	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
9	Irish Coach Tourism Scheme	Fáilte Ireland
10	Ireland-Based Inbound Agents Business Continuity Scheme	Fáilte Ireland
11	Tourism Business Continuity Scheme 2021	Fáilte Ireland
12	Small Business Assistance Scheme for COVID (SBASC)	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

## 8. What are the Membership Criteria for ITOA, AIPCO and IGTOA

Please refer to Irish Incoming Tour Operators Association (ITOA) or <https://itoe-ireland.com/> for their Membership Criteria.

Please refer to Irish Golf Tour Operators Association (IGTOA) or <https://igtoa.com/> for their Membership Criteria

Please refer to Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers or <https://aipco.ie/new/> for their Membership Criteria.

## 9. What are Fáilte Ireland's Criteria for Ultra-Lux Destination Management Company, Destination Management Companies & Professional Conference Organisers?

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Please refer to the Guidelines for this scheme for a full breakdown of the membership criteria for the above-mentioned groups.

To become Fáilte Ireland approved, you will need to complete a separate application process.

## 10. What businesses do not qualify to apply for the grant?

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**The following entities are deemed ineligible and therefore excluded from applying for this Scheme:**

- Online Travel Agents
- Retail Travel Agent
- Online Resellers
- Domestic/National event planners (those organising events in Ireland for Ireland based attendees)
- Individual service providers/suppliers to Incoming Tour Operators, DMCs or PCOs including but not limited to day tours/excursions, ticketing providers, team building providers, wedding planners, accommodation providers, venues, universities, catering companies, florists, entertainment providers, AV companies, transport companies, visitor attractions.
- Accommodation Marketing Groups
- Public Relations & Communications Companies
- Venue Finding Agencies
- Production Companies
- Exhibition Companies
- Concerts, Festivals, Sporting or Cultural Event organisers

**Decisions taken by Fáilte Ireland on eligibility are full and final and not open to appeal.**

## 11. How do I apply?

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- Only eligible applicants will qualify for this Scheme.
- All applicants will be required to have a profile on Fáilte Ireland's 'Trade Portal' which is accessible on [www.failteireland.ie](http://www.failteireland.ie). If you do not already have an account, you will be required to create one.
- Those that already have a Trade Portal account, the application form can also be found under '**Funding**'.
- The Guidelines, Terms and Conditions and Application Form will be available on [www.failteireland.ie](http://www.failteireland.ie)
- Applicants should note that granting access to the application form does not confirm final eligibility on an applicant. Depending on the information provided in the application form, an applicant may still be deemed ineligible for funding later in the process.

## 12. What documentation/information will be required in support of my application?

- Management accounts for 2021. Please note, these do not need to be prepared by an accountant.
- Full Annual Financial Statements for 2019. Where audited Financial Statements are abridged for filing purposes, the unabridged version should be provided. If your business is a Sole Trader or Partnership, where full financial statements have not been prepared, you will need to provide your 2019 business profit and loss account as part of this application.
- Tax Reference Number (TRN), or Companies Registration Office number (CRO) as appropriate.
- Copy of your 2019 tax return (CT1, Partnership or Individual). Please note, payment cannot be made if applicant is not tax cleared in Republic of Ireland.
- If eligible tourism turnover is in excess of €1million in 2019, an independent auditor's letter is required confirming that this is the case.
- Be established and registered for Tax in the Republic of Ireland.
- The total value of EU State Aid received by the applicant and/or by its wider group entities to date under the EU Temporary Framework for State Aid Measures to Support the Economy in the Current COVID-19 Outbreak.
- Under State Aid rules contained in the COVID-19 EU "Temporary Framework for State Aid measures to support the economy in the current COVID-19 Outbreak", large and medium-sized enterprises more than 3 years in business cannot have been an undertaking in difficulty ON OR BEFORE 31 December 2019. If the business is a large or medium sized enterprise over 3 years in business and was not an undertaking in difficulty as defined above, an uploaded letter of either (i) an independent accountant's verifying that this is the case or (ii) an audit letter/report signed by an accountant for the most recently prepared year-end financial statements is required.
- Bank Account Details and a copy of a recent Bank Statement Header. This information will only be used in verifying the payment details so that we can process the payment without unnecessary delay. It will only be retained for successful applicants for a period of 10 years.

## 13. What if I cannot get all the documentation required together within the allocated time?

All documentation must be received by the closing date. You can save your application as you progress through the various steps in order to gather your documentation, but please note once you press submit there is no returning to the application.

The scheme closes on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at noon. No further applications will be accepted after that date.

## 14. Is 2019 turnover relating to the business financial year or the calendar year?

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This relates to the calendar year, January to December 2019.

## 15. What if my financial year doesn't run from January – December?

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If your financial statements cover a period other than January – December 2019, please indicate on your application form the turnover relating to the January – December period and upload the financial statements to cover all of 2019.

If further financial information is required during the assessment, the evaluation team will be in contact with you.

## 16. What do you mean by management accounts? If I'm a sole trader without management accounts, what do I do?

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Businesses maintain management accounts to monitor financial performance. Management accounts generally comprise a monthly or quarterly and year to date Profit & Loss Account and Balance Sheet.

While all applicants are required to provide management accounts, smaller sole trader businesses may only maintain an Income and Expenditure account (equivalent to a Profit and

Loss account) to track the income generated and the costs and expenses arising for their business during the year. That is what we are looking for from these businesses for the period identified in the Application Form.

**Management accounts do not need to be prepared by an accountant, however, please ensure they are as accurate as possible, as this Scheme will be subject to audit in the future.**

## 17. I have more than one eligible business, how do I apply?

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When submitting an application, applicants must declare any other applications being made for affiliated businesses to the same Scheme; i.e., an applicant should declare if they have more than one business (company, sole trader, partnership etc.) applying and/or if their business shares common ownership with another business that is also applying to the Scheme.

Each business may apply per eligible legal entity or as a group. While applications will be evaluated on their own merit, they will be considered a 'group' for

the purposes of this Scheme, i.e., for entities that meet the conditions of a group, total combined eligible turnover is utilised to determine grant payment. Payment of any grants will be calculated subject to Scheme caps and with taking into account EU State Aid rules.

**Please note:** Multiple applicants with the same or common ownership/control are considered one economic unit and therefore a single "undertaking" for the purposes of EU State Aid rules.

## 18. How will the grant be paid?

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The grant will be paid by electronic transfer to the business account detailed on the application form. A copy of a recent Bank Statement Header is required to verify details for payment.

## 19. When will the Scheme be open for applications?

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The scheme opened for applications on **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022**.

## 20. What is the closing date for applications to the Fund?

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All completed applications for the Scheme must be submitted to Fáilte Ireland by 12 noon on **Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022** at noon.

Early application is advisable due to the expected volume of applications and evaluation process required.

## 21. How long will it take to receive payment?

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Applications will be assessed as soon as possible once the scheme opens. Therefore, it is critical that documentations submitted is accurate and complete. Incomplete documentation will result in payment delays.

Fáilte Ireland will contact applicants with any queries that may arise relating to their applications

## 22. We are an Inbound Tour Operator and also a Tourism Coach Operator – which grant is most applicable to us?

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Applicants are welcome to apply to both Schemes provided that they meet the criteria for each individual Scheme. Therefore, the applicant must be one of the eligible business types outlined under each Scheme, along with providing evidence for each criteria as indicated in the Application Form and Guidelines.



## **23. Do we include turnover for virtual conference activity when declaring our eligible turnover in 2021?**

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Virtual conference activity does not need to be included in the applicant declared turnover for 2021.

## **24. If I applied to the previous Irish Based Inbound Agent Scheme 2020, can I apply to this Scheme?**

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Yes, provided you meet the eligibility criteria and submit all relevant documentation.