

FAQ for the Strategic Tourism Transport Business Continuity Scheme.

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.

Q1. What is the Scheme about?

The Scheme aims to support the strategic tourism transport sector as it enables visitors to access the geographically dispersed Irish tourism offering. Pre COVID-19, these businesses would have earned a large portion of their income by providing tourism services to visitors and since COVID-19, have struggled to continue in business due to the restrictions placed on their operations. Supporting this sector will support regionality and enable a successful spread of demand around the country when COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

Q2. What tourism businesses can apply for this round of the scheme?

The following businesses can apply once they meet the eligibility criteria:

- Business Category A: Tourism Vehicle Rental Sector
- Business Category B: Tourism Chauffeur, Limousine Services & Escorted Private Tours

Q3. How will the grant amount be determined?

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 10% of the 2019 eligible tourism turnover figure (subject to the maximum grant as set out below, and State aid rules).
- The minimum grant amount per applicant is €5,000 based on a minimum eligible tourism turnover of €50,000.
- The maximum grant amount per applicant is €800,000. For applicants with eligible tourism turnover of €8 million and above, €800,000 is the maximum award payable out under this Scheme, subject to State aid rules.

Q4. What is State Aid and how will it affect my grant?

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 State Aid:

	Title	Granting Authority
1	Repayable Advances Scheme Ireland	Enterprise Ireland & IDA Ireland
2	Sustaining Enterprise Scheme	Enterprise Ireland & IDA Ireland

3	Scheme to facilitate COVID-19 relevant research and development, to support construction and upgrade of testing and upscaling facilities of COVID-19 relevant products and to support investments into the production of COVID-19 relevant products	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

Q5. If a business received the Fáilte Ireland Adaptation Grant are they eligible for the Strategic Tourism Transport Business Continuity Scheme?

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 Fund along with any other funding under the COVID-19 EU State Aid Temporary Framework.

Q6. What elements of my business's turnover are eligible?

The following constitutes eligible tourism turnover for each category:

Business Category A: Tourism Vehicle Rental Sector

Eligible Tourism Turnover	Ineligible Turnover
Eligible applicants must have a minimum eligible tourism turnover threshold of €50,000 in 2019	Non-tourism related transport turnover e.g. van hire
Eligible turnover relates to turnover generated from tourism vehicle rental to domestic and overseas visitors	Non-tourism contracted business e.g. commercial, car replacement services

Business Category B: Tourism Chauffeur, Limousine Services & Escorted Private Tours

Eligible Tourism Turnover	Ineligible Turnover
Eligible applicants must have a minimum eligible tourism turnover threshold of €50,000 in 2019	Corporate and non-tourism related VIP
Turnover generated from tourism event organisers, conference venue managers, inbound tour agents and similar tourism intermediaries.	Wedding Car Hire & Ceremonial Events

Turnover generated from the provision of a minimum half day escorted tour booked Eligible directly by visitors.	Turnover generated on tourism activity taking place outside the Republic of Ireland
	Transport for non-tourism related activities e.g. school bus route
	Point to point services

Q7. What do you mean by point-to-point services? (In relation to Business Category B)

The Strategic Tourism Transport Business Continuity Scheme has been developed to support strategically important **tourism** transport businesses. These are businesses that

1. enable visitors to access the geographically dispersed Irish tourism offering, often in remote locations which are difficult to access with public transport or
2. provide a tourism experience to the visitor.

Point-to-point services which provide a direct transfer or similar service to public transport are excluded from this scheme. For example, where a public service vehicle, such as a taxi or bus, could equally bring the tourist from Point A (e.g. airport) to Point B (e.g. city centre). These are one off, point-to-point transfers.

Transfers which are part of a wider contract for a minimum of a half day may be considered eligible tourism turnover. E.g. These can be transfers

- included in contracts for delivering full itineraries for leisure tourists, or
- included in contracts for conference, incentive or events in the case of business tourists.

Q.8 Are airport transfers eligible?

Airport transfers which are part of a wider contract for a minimum of a half day may be considered eligible tourism turnover. E.g. These can be transfers

- included in contracts for delivering full itineraries for leisure tourists, or
- included in contracts for conference, incentive or events in the case of business tourists.

Turnover generated from one-off airport transfers that are point-to-point is not eligible for inclusion. (see Q.7 above)

Q9. What invoicing/evidence of eligible tourism turnover can be submitted with the application form?

For applicants in **Business Category B: Tourism Chauffeur, Limousine Services & Escorted Private Tours** to be eligible to apply, applicants are required to submit evidence to the value of 10% of declared eligible tourism turnover for 2019.

The following constitutes acceptable examples (but not limited to) of evidence to demonstrate that the business engages in tourism activity:

- Invoice clearly stating tourism purposes
- Invoice or proof of bank transfer in 2019 from members of the following:
 - Irish Tour Operators Association
 - Ireland Golf Tour Operator Association
 - Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers
- Invoice or bank transfer from a licenced tour operator
- Invoice to a Fáilte Ireland registered accommodation provider
- Invoice from a tourism experience provider e.g. visitor attraction, tourism activity operator

If you have any queries on the type of evidence that can be provided please email us at customersupport@failteireland.ie.

Q.10. If I carry out work as a subcontractor for another tourism transport provider, is that eligible? (In relation to Business Category B)

If the service you provide as part of the contract generates eligible tourism turnover, then that is eligible. See table in Q7 for more information. Your application can be supported by evidence in the form of invoice(s) to the contracting tourism transport provider.

Q11. Is 2019 turnover relating to the business financial year or the calendar year?

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

Q12. What if my financial year doesn't run from January – December?

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 you have which end in 2019. If further financial information is required during the assessment, the evaluation team will be in contact with you.

Q13. What do you mean by management accounts? If I'm a sole trader without management accounts, what do I do?

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.

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.

Q14 Are minibuses, coaches and double-deckers included in this scheme? (In Relation to Business Category B)

The type of vehicle is not relevant in the context of this scheme as long as all statutory licensing regulations are met. If the vehicle provides a tourism service and generates eligible tourism turnover (See Q.6 above) then it can be included in the application.

Q15. Are there any age limits on vehicles when applying?

No, there are no age limitations on vehicles. Applications will be evaluated on eligible tourism turnover per business. The activity associated with coaches of all ages can be included to show the total tourism turnover of a business. Funding received from coach tourism will be reflected in the final grant payment as per the guidelines.

Q16. How will the grant be paid?

The grant will be paid by electronic transfer to the business account detailed on the application form.

Q17. When will the Scheme be open for applications?

The scheme opened for applications on **Thursday April 8th, 2021.**

Q18. What is the closing date for applications to the Fund?

The closing date for the submission of applications is **12 Noon on Thursday May 13th 2021**.

Q19. How long will it take to receive payment?

Due to the anticipated high volume of applications, Fáilte Ireland will endeavour to process applications as quickly as possible. However, applicants should be aware that during peaks in applications this may be a matter of weeks. We will keep all applicants informed throughout the application process of anticipated timeliness for completion.

Only fully completed forms will be processed, and the onus is on the applicant to ensure that applications are completed correctly and fully, in order to expedite the procedure.

Fáilte Ireland will contact applicants with any queries on applications and regarding the status of the application.

Q20. I operate from more than one business premises, how do I apply?

Applications are to be made per business who meet the eligibility criteria. Applications should be submitted based on their legal entity regardless if the business activity occurs in more than one location.

Q21. I have more than one eligible business, how do I apply?

If you have more than one business/affiliate company that meets the eligibility criteria and are established as separate legal entities, applications are to be submitted per legal entity.

Payment of grants will be issued per legal entity taking into account State Aid rules per Applicant. The maximum funding level under the “Temporary Framework for State Aid Measures to Support the Economy in the Current Covid-19 Outbreak” will be considered per Applicant for all affiliate businesses.

The Applicant will be asked to declare all applications being submitted for affiliated businesses when submitting the application forms.