

**WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL**

**BUSINESS & RETAIL INCENTIVE SCHEME FOR  
VACANT COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL  
PROPERTY  
IN COUNTY WEXFORD**



**GUIDELINES & APPLICATION FORM**

**Economic Development Section,  
Wexford County Council**



**Comhairle Contae  
Loch Garman  
Wexford  
County Council**

**Wexford County Council Incentive Scheme for Vacant Commercial and Industrial Property in County Wexford**

**Application Form**

<b>Section A – Applicant details</b>	
Name of applicant (Company Name if applicable):	
Name of contact person:	
Address of applicant:	
Address of vacant property being the subject of this application:	
Property Reference number or Valuation Office Reference number (if known):	
Area(s) of property to be occupied (basement, ground floor, first floor etc.):	
If property leased state duration of lease being entered into:	
Date of commencement of lease:	
Email address of applicant:	
Phone number of applicant:	
VAT registration number:	
PPS number (if individual):	
Tax Clearance Certificate Number and Expiry Date (please enclose copy):	
Date of last annual return filed in the Company Registration Office (if applicable) :	
Please provide copy of last 2 years audited accounts if relevant:	

<b>Section B –Applicant</b>			
Company/Sole Trader / Individual/Partnership:			
Community Group:			
Cooperative:			
If applicant is a Limited Company please complete section below:			
Company Registration Number:			
Date of Incorporation:			
Associated Companies (if any):			
<b>Section C - Previous Status of Applicant (Please Tick)</b>			
Self Employed	Employed	Unemployed	Training/Education
<b>Section D – Details of proposed business</b>			
Business Name:			
Stage of Business i.e. Pre-Start-Up/Start-Up(<18months)/Growth (> 18 months):			
Choose either the <u>current year</u> or the <u>subsequent year</u> as the starting point (year 1) for grant relief.			
Date trading expected to commence:			
List locations/address where currently trading (if applicable):			
Proposed Start-up/investment date for vacant property which is the subject of this application:			
Specify business type:			
Provide explanatory note outlining in detail the key features of the proposed business use:			
Economic value of proposed business use i.e. no. of jobs to be created; overall benefit to street etc.:			
Please provide the relevant Planning Permission Reference (if planning permission is necessary for works):			
Does the property in question have planning permission for the proposed use? (or is the proposed use compatible with the exempted development classes of use set out in the Planning & Development Regulations):			
Is the building a protected structure?			

**Section E – Total cost of occupying property**

The purpose of this section is to establish the total cost involved in occupying the property for which grant relief is sought under the Grant Incentive Scheme for Vacant Property.  
Where the grant applicant is in a position to recover VAT the costs should be expressed net of recoverable VAT. Invoices are to be submitted for verification purposes.

NOTE:

Fit-out costs are eligible for 100% grant funding subject to a ceiling of 75% relief in year 1, 50% relief in year 2 and 25% relief in year 3 of annual rates liability for property in respect of which application is made.

<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>State amount of cost that is to be submitted for grant claim</b>
	€	€
<b>Capital Items</b>		
<b>Rental/Accommodation Costs</b>		
<b>Other Costs</b>		
<b>Total Cost</b>		

**Section F – Annual Rates liability for applicant property to be occupied (to be completed by Wexford County Council)**

Annual Rates liability (€) for applicant property to be occupied:	
---	--

**Section G – Funding Package**

The purpose of this section is to establish how the proposed business activity use will be funded.

NOTES: The total of this section should match that of the costs specified in Section E

Source	Amount €
Own Funds (Specify)	
Borrowing (Loan sanction evidence if available)	
Grant Sought	
<b>Total Project cost (to agree with total project cost Section E)</b>	

**If the project is availing of other grant schemes or other favourable advantages please provide details:**

## Section H – De Minimis State Aid

Please note that the Business Office Incentive Grant Scheme grants for vacant properties should fulfill the conditions of Commission Regulation EC800/2008 which is called the general Block Exemption Regulation. There is a ceiling of €200,000 regardless of the source, given to any one enterprise (including groups) over a 3 year period.

Business Office Incentive Scheme grants for vacant property are made on the understanding that the grant combined with any other de minimis aid received by you in the last 3 years does not exceed the ceiling of €200,000 for all de minimis aid. Any body awarding de minimis aid is required to highlight this in any letter offering funding to enable you to identify any de minimis aid you may have received. In order to enable us to maintain our records, we ask that you answer the question below and complete the attached table outlining any de minimis state aid received in the last 3 years.

Have you or your company received any de minimis state aid in the last 3 years or used de minimis state aid as match funding for this application: **Yes** \_\_\_\_ **No** \_\_\_\_

If yes please provide the following details:

Date of Offer	Name of Body Providing Aid	Purpose of Aid	Amount of Aid Received (€)

## Section I – Additional Information

- (i) This application or part of this application may have to be referred to and/or queried with other State bodies (e.g. Revenue Commissioners) and Departments of Wexford County Council (e.g. Planning Department, Rates Department) (on a confidential basis) as part of Wexford County Council's processing procedure. Do you consent to this? (*please tick*)  
 YES  NO
- (ii) Are you (or the company) registered for VAT (please tick) (Tax clearance certificates are required for all grants in excess of €10,000 if approved. For grants in excess of €6,350 a tax declaration will be required). (*please tick*)  
 YES  NO
- (iii) Do you require any permissions or licences to proceed with your business as submitted in this application? (*please tick*)  
 YES  NO
- (iv) Please give details of the following:

Bankers	
Accountant	
Solicitor	
Insurers	

<b>Checklist of documents to be attached to your application</b>	
√	Copy of business plan including cash flow projections – not required where application is for €5,000 or less
√	Copy of Tax Clearance Certificate
√	Copy of lease agreement (if not owner of vacant property subject to this claim) <u>OR</u> If you are owner of vacant property – need to provide evidence of property ownership (e.g. Land Registry Certificate).
√	Copies of any relevant market research undertaken
√	Copies of signed audited accounts for last two years (if relevant) – not applicable for new businesses
√	Submit confirmation of borrowing approval (loan sanction evidence/ evidence of other finance resources) to fund total project)

#### **DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION – FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

Wexford County Council wishes to advise applicants that, under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 the information supplied in the application form may be made available on request, subject to Wexford County Council’s obligations under law.

You are asked to consider if any of the information supplied by you in this application should not be disclosed because of sensitivity. If this is the case you should, when providing the information, identify same and specify the reasons for its sensitivity. Wexford County Council will consult with you about sensitive information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received.

However, if you consider that none of the information supplied by you is sensitive, please complete the statement below to that effect. Such information may be released in response to a Freedom of Information request.

**Name of Applicant (in block capitals):** \_\_\_\_\_ hereby agrees that none of the information supplied is sensitive, and any, or all, of the information supplied, may be released in response to a Freedom of Information request.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Company/Organisation’s name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**DISCLAIMER - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

It will be a condition of any application for funding under the terms and conditions of the Business Office Incentive Grant Scheme for vacant property that the applicant has read, understood and accepted the following:

1. Wexford County Council shall not be liable to the applicant or any other party, in respect of any loss, damage or costs of any nature arising directly or indirectly from:
  - a) The application or the subject matter of the application
  - b) The rejection for any reason of any application.
  
2. Wexford County Council shall not be held responsible or liable, at any time in any circumstances, in relation to any matter whatsoever arising in connection with the administration of activities.

**Declaration by Applicant (s)**

We apply for a grant of €\_\_\_\_\_ towards the total cost of the Fit-Out/Shop Front Improvement costs of Vacant Property at \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_

I/we have read and understood the **guidelines and criteria** as set out in Wexford County Council's Incentive Grant Scheme for Vacant Property and agree to comply in full therewith. I/we certify that all information provided in this application, and all information given in any documentation submitted in support of the application is truthful and accurate.

Name: (in block capitals): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of: (company/ organisation's name): \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed Application Forms should be submitted to the Economic Development Section, Wexford County Council, County Hall, Carricklawn, Wexford, or alternatively the completed form can be e-mailed to [economic@wexfordcoco.ie](mailto:economic@wexfordcoco.ie). Please see website [www.wexford.ie](http://www.wexford.ie) for further details and application forms for the scheme.**



# **Guidelines & Criteria for Wexford County Council's Incentive Scheme for Vacant Commercial & Industrial Property in County Wexford**

## **1. General description and Specification of Eligible/Non Eligible Use Types**

Wexford County Council is providing a Vacant Property Grant Incentive Scheme to encourage the use of vacant commercial and industrial property across the County. The grant is being offered as a contribution towards fit out costs. By encouraging the occupation of vacant properties the council is supporting the appearance and attraction of an area, thereby contributing indirectly to increased footfall for existing business. The main driver behind the scheme is sustainable job creation by developing new markets while supporting existing businesses.

## **2. Eligibility**

(a) The scheme encompasses all of County Wexford however applications in the following areas will be prioritised under the scheme:

- The main urban centres Bunclody, Enniscorthy, Gorey, New Ross and Wexford
- Property located in existing Business and Industrial parks
- Businesses operating in the Hospitality and Tourism sector (particularly projects that contribute to the regeneration of key tourism infrastructure in Rosslare, Hook Peninsula and Courtown areas).
- Art/Craft related studio/shops and Artisan food shops

(b) It is policy not to grant-aid for the following uses:

- Betting shop
- Amusement Arcade
- Public Bar
- Nightclub
- Off-Licence
- Charity shop

(c) In addition the following factors will be taken into account in the consideration of Grant Aid: -

- The number and proximity of similar businesses already operating in the area
- The scale of the proposed business
- The physical impact of the proposed use on the internal structure of the building in which it will be located
- The quality of the design and associated signage.

The design of the business and associated signage shall be of high quality and be in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Local Area Plan and County Development Plan.

(d) Any non-retail business which applies for grant aid under this scheme will be judged on the anticipated economic impact that they may have in County Wexford e.g. number of jobs bein created.

(e) The Director of Services reserves the right to apply discretion on eligibility for this scheme.

### **3. Use of Property**

The property that the application relates to must have planning permission for the proposed use or be compatible with the exempted development classes of use set out in the Planning & Development Regulations.

### **4. Status of property to qualify for the Incentive Scheme for vacant property**

In order to qualify for this scheme the property must be vacant for 12 months on the day the application form is submitted.

### **5. Businesses relocating to similar sized premises within county Wexford will not qualify for grant relief under the scheme**

The operation of the Incentive Scheme for vacant properties shall not result in the displacement of a business from one property to another and/or from the same property **however** should a proposed office use type be able to adequately demonstrate that they require a larger premises that will have a positive economic impact, consideration will be given to the inclusion of such a proposal under the terms of this scheme.

### **6. Grant Relief to be provided**

**The applicant can choose either the current year or the subsequent year as the starting point (year 1) for grant relief.**

- (i) Year 1 - Grant relief is based on certified fit out costs/office improvement cost subject to a maximum of 75% of the annual rates liability.
- (ii) Year 2 – Grant relief is based on original certified fit out costs/office improvement costs (as submitted at year 1) subject to a maximum of 50% of the annual rates liability.
- (iii) Year 3 – Grant relief is based on original certified fit out costs/office improvement costs (as submitted at year 1) subject to a maximum of 25% of the annual rates liability.

Payment of grant will commence one month following first rates moiety being demanded and paid in full.

## **7. Qualifying Costs for Grant Relief**

Any reasonable costs associated with Fit-out/office improvement will qualify for grant relief subject to receipt of valid invoices and verification/approval that costs were incurred.

## **8. No charges owing on vacant property for which relief is sought i.e. rates, development levies, derelict sites levies etc.**

A prerequisite condition of qualifying for the scheme is that there are no rates, or any other Local Authority charges owing on the building for which the relief is sought, or on any other commercial property occupied by the applicant, or the applicant

## **9. Appeal mechanism**

The Economic Development Section of Wexford County Council is responsible for the approval or not of the grant subject to the guidelines and criteria for the Wexford County Council Business Office Incentive Scheme for Vacant Property. Should anybody/individual wish to appeal this decision they may do so by stating in writing the basis for the appeal; this appeal should be addressed to the Economic Development Section, Wexford County Council, County Hall, Carricklawn, Wexford. The decision of the Director of Services in respect of the appeal will be final.

## **10. It shall be a condition of the scheme that the applicant signs up for Standing Order payment of commercial rates.**

## **11. Effective period for operation of Wexford County Council's grant Incentive Scheme for vacant property in County Wexford.**

The scheme will be effective until the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017. Only complete applications received from the adoption date of the scheme to this end date will be considered.

## **12. Assessment of applications**

All Applications will be assessed under the above Guidelines & Criteria and any grant awarded will be further subject to the availability of the necessary funds being available to this Scheme. The decision of the Director of Economic Development, Wexford County Council shall be final in all matters relating to this grant scheme.