

EMFF Operational Programme 2014-2020  
Seafood Processing Development Measure

# Seafood Innovation & Business Planning Scheme

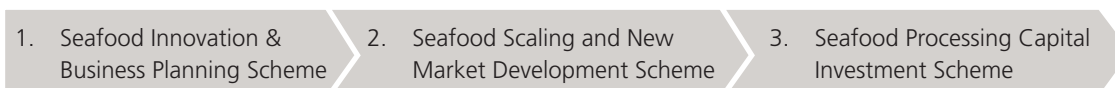
Brochure



## 1. Overview of Seafood Processing Development Measure

The Seafood Processing Development Measure is intended to drive growth of the Irish Seafood Processing sector through innovation, enhancing scale and competitiveness in industry, and capital investment in new technologies.

The Measure includes three investment schemes as follows:



	Seafood Innovation & Business Planning Scheme	Seafood Scaling and New Market Development Scheme	Seafood Processing Capital Investment Scheme
<b>Aim</b>	To enable entrepreneurs and seafood companies to innovate and grow businesses; to build capability in the sector through improved leadership, and management & business planning practices.	To promote scale and collaboration in the sector. To fund projects which address key sector issues.	To support the development of a value added processing sector which is competitive and sustainable.
<b>What's included?</b>	Supports new product and technology development, R&D and business planning.	Industry collaboration forums, Joint Ventures between companies, producers and processors. Projects which address common sector issues.	Capital investments which reduce energy costs; improves safety, health, hygiene and traceability; and adds value through processing, presentation and packaging
<b>How?</b>	Provides grant aid for up to €20,000 or 50% (whichever lower) of 3rd party costs per project/year.  The scheme allows for public or sector innovation projects funding up to 100%.	Industry grant aid up to 50% capped at €120,000 per Collective per year.  The scheme allows for public or common sector projects funding up to 100%.	Provides grant aid on gross eligible costs of up to a maximum of €1.7 million at the following grant rates: – up to 30% of secondary processing equipment – up to 15% for all other eligible items Projects may concern investment in either or a mixture of the above investment types.  This means the <b>maximum</b> grant for any one project/beneficiary per year is: – €510,000 (€1.7m @ 30%) where all eligible expenditure is approved/ incurred at the higher rate of 30%. or – €255,000 (€1.7m @ 15%) where all eligible expenditure is approved/ incurred at the lower rate of 15%. Projects involving a mixture of investment types will attract a grant pro rata to the mixture and subject to a maximum of €1.7m eligible expenditure.
<b>Who to talk to in BIM?</b>	Your BIM Key Account Manager (KAM*)	Your BIM Key Account Manager (KAM*)	Your BIM Key Account Manager (KAM*)

\*BIM Business Development & Innovation has a team of regionally located Key Account Managers (KAM) to assist with company development plans and identifying appropriate schemes to support ideas, projects and investment. Please contact BIM at 01 2144 279 to advise your KAM contact.

## 2. Legal Basis

The legal basis for the schemes are based on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Regulation (508/2014) covering the period 2014-2020. The EMFF is intended to support the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and is considered the financial instrument of the CFP. The EMFF is solely concerned with measures that are co-funded by the EU.

## 3. Objective

The objective of the Seafood Processing Development measure is to enhance the competitiveness of the seafood processing sector. This includes processing of all fishery and aquaculture products.

The sector is characterised by a large number of micro and small enterprises, with only two non-SMEs. It suffers from low profitability, low levels of innovation and new product development, inefficient route to market structures and insufficient strategic business planning. Raw material supply to the sector is constrained by biological limit on wild catch fisheries and by the productive output of the aquaculture sector. High levels of commodity sales fail to maximise the value of this raw material supply.

This Measure aims to improve the competitiveness of the sector (and thus increase employment and economic value) by implementing certain elements of the strategy for the seafood processing sector as outlined in section 3.1 of the OP, specifically improving the competitiveness of seafood processing enterprises. The Strategy outlines a number of areas of investment to achieve this objective:

- 1) Add value to fish through processing, presentation, and packaging, prioritising supports for secondary processing;
- 2) Promote innovation and new product development;
- 3) Promote economies of scale through industry co-operation, joint ventures, and shared route to market structures;
- 4) Improve safety, health, quality, hygiene and traceability;
- 5) Reduce energy costs.

## 4. Project Description

The Seafood Processing Development Measure to be administered by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), aims to achieve the above objective by providing support for a range of grant awards to the following project types.

Project Type 1	Projects that support innovation and business planning	Articles 68 & 69
Project Type 2	Projects that support scaling and new market development	Articles 68 & 69
Project Type 3	Projects that support capital investment	Article 69

BIM will launch competitive calls for projects. These will be open to both the public sector and to industry, and will support relevant projects that align with the EMFF OP objectives outlined in this document.

## Seafood Innovation and Business Planning Scheme

The scheme supports projects that seek to promote innovation and new product development.

Projects include the following:

- **Industry projects** with the objective of developing new value added products/processes or the certification of products beyond legislative requirements (e.g. BRC). These include new product development, packaging, process and technology development, market surveys, projects which promote supply chain efficiency and traceability, environmentally friendly processing methods.
- **Public projects** with the objective of developing new value added products/processes and technologies. Projects include facilitating innovation and knowledge transfer between industry and research institutions.
- **Industry and Public projects** with the objective of enabling seafood SMEs to develop a structured business approach to seafood innovation and assist in Business Planning/Gap Analysis/and Mentoring to Seafood SMEs.

### Eligible Beneficiaries

- Individual Seafood Processing SMEs;
- Collectives of Seafood Processing SMEs;
- SME enterprises planning to enter the seafood processing industry;
- Public Bodies.

### Eligible costs

Include third party professional costs relating to:

- Innovation advisory services.
- Activities directly related to the production development process, from lab trials to pilot production runs.
- Technical development of packaging e.g. production of trial quantity (trial product purchase must be purchased from a third party. Trial product and logistics costs cannot exceed 10% of the overall approved expenditure).
- Product testing and validation e.g. micro testing, shelf life testing, organoleptic testing.
- Consumer/user testing.
- Piloting through to final product approval, e.g. pilot equipment rental (max. 16 week period), pilot packaging.
- Rental costs (must be from approved rental companies whose core business involves food machinery).
- Business planning and project feasibility costs that require the involvement of third party business consultants/mentors. The objective of projects involving such activities will be to develop a structured business approach to seafood innovation and assist in Business Planning, Gap Analysis and Mentoring to Seafood SMEs.
- Project activities directly related to defining the business opportunity e.g. marketing plans and market research.
- Industry Quality Standard costs beyond legislative requirements.

### Ineligible Costs

Include costs relating to:

- Rental of machinery other than from an establishment whose core business is the supply/rental of said equipment.
- Non third party costs, e.g. operational costs of the business.
- Brand design promotion.
- Trial product and logistics costs exceeding 10% of the overall approved expenditure.
- The cost of existing product, stock or raw material used as part of the project.
- Energy, maintenance and operational costs.
- Travel and subsistence costs.

## Support Rates

- BIM Service Projects will be 100% funded.
- The maximum grant for **industry** projects is €20,000, or up to 50% of eligible spend, whichever is the lesser, per project, per year. For **collective** industry projects, this amount may increase in direct proportion to the number of members in the collective, to a maximum of €80,000 as per the table below.

Grant Aid Levels Available for Industry Projects	
No. of Members in the Industry Collective	Maximum Grant Aid Receivable per project per year
2 member collective	€40,000
3 member collective	€60,000
4 member collective	€80,000
> 4 member collective	€80,000

- For Public projects, a maximum of 100% of eligible expenditure may be supported, up to a maximum grant of €1,000,000 per project.
- The actual amount of grant and grant rate awarded is at the discretion of the Board.

## 5. Application Criteria

The following common criteria shall apply to all applications for industry, collective and public projects.

### Applicants/Project Applications

- Applications may not span two or more project types under the scheme.
- and /or such other information as may be required by the Board to confirm such viability.
- Must be in good standing with DAFM at time of payment.
  - Applications must be submitted to BIM and acknowledged by BIM before any payments are made to suppliers. Should the application be approved, any payments made prior to the date of acknowledgment of receipt of the application will not be eligible for grant aid.
- Must have a current tax clearance certificate.
- Must comply with conditions of any subsequent letter of offer.
- Must provide three quotes for each item.

### Projects

- Must be aligned with the objectives of the scheme;
- Must be an integral part of the strategic development plans of the company;
- Must represent a cost effective use of investment support funds;
- Must demonstrate an ability to upscale production.

## 6. Selection Process

Projects will be selected for funding via competitive/open calls for proposals.

Industry, collective and public projects will be selected for funding as follows.

Step	Description	Carried Out By
1. Competitive call for proposals	BIM will invite applications under the 3 Project types.	BIM
2. Eligibility Check and Evaluation	To ensure compliance and to assess validity.	BIM
3. Assessment Scoring or Appraisal	To assess project potential.	BIM or external evaluators as appropriate
4. Final Project Selection	To select projects for funding and decide grant amounts and grant rates.	Project Approvals Board
5. Grant Offer	BIM will issue letters of offer awarding EMFF funding.	BIM

The Projects Approvals Board will approve industry, collective and public projects for assistance.

Project scoring of industry and collective projects will be conducted using the Project Assessment Criteria detailed in section 7. Projects must achieve a minimum total score of 15 out of 25 to be considered for support by the Project Approvals Board.

Public projects will be appraised on a qualitative basis having regard to the objective of the call and the quality of the proposal.



## 7. Industry Project Assessment Criteria

1. Project Planning/Objectives		
DEFINITION		Score
Rate the level of project planning as follows:-		
– Well defined project, consistent with the applicant’s business plan. Clear milestones, meets all legal requirements, management and technical resources assigned. Well defined and transparent costing and reasonable timescale. Contingency planning in place. Adequate funding in place to deliver the project.	Outstanding	5
– As above but less defined some milestones, management staffing and costing – some room for improvement. Adequate funding in place to deliver the project.	Strong	4
– Reasonable project definition. Reasonable attempt at costing. Some level of management responsibility – may require modification. Adequate funding in place to deliver the project.	Reasonable	3
– Project not well defined. Costing and value for money unclear. Management and technical resources unclear, timescale unrealistic. Adequate funding is not in place to deliver the project.	Poor	2
– Poorly defined in terms of objectives, milestones and cost. Staffing and management very unsatisfactory. Adequate funding is not in place to deliver the project.	Very Weak	1
<b>Comment on the quality of project planning.</b>		
2. Marketing Capability Assessment		
DEFINITION		Score
– Project is in line with the company business plan objectives. Advance market research report completed. Company demonstrates very good marketing capability with strong marketing investment, in line with the requirements of the project.	Outstanding	5
– Company demonstrates good marketing capability with evidence of good marketing investment in line with the requirements of the project.	Strong	4
– Project is in line with the company business plan objectives. Company is investing in marketing and has researched the project.	Satisfactory	3
– Company demonstrates weak marketing capability and inadequate market research investment.	Poor	2
– No evidence of marketing capability or investment in marketing required to complete the project.	Very Weak	1



<b>3. Business Promoters Track Record</b>		
<b>DEFINITION</b>		<b>Score</b>
– Strong track record in the sector and growing their business. Evidence of Commercialising previous projects and increasing sales. Successful track record in terms of Commercial / technical viability. Ability to plan / fund projects.	Outstanding	5
– As previous but record not as strong.	Strong	4
– Reasonable track record in the sector.	Satisfactory	3
– Weak track record.	Poor	2
– No track record.	Very Weak	1
<b>4. Impact of Funding</b>		
<b>DEFINITION</b>		<b>Score</b>
– How essential is the Programme funding to enable the company to undertake the project(s)? And – How consistent is the project with National objectives / targets for the sector.		
– Project is highly unlikely to proceed without grant aid. And – Project directly addresses National development objectives / targets.	High	5
– Project is unlikely to proceed without grant aid. And / Or – Is generally in line with National development objectives / targets.	Medium	3
– Grant aid will act as a catalyst in for project implementation. And – Project is vaguely consistent with National development objectives / targets.	Low	1
<b>5. Employment Creation/Maintenance</b>		
<b>DEFINITION</b>		<b>Score</b>
The impact on employment creation/maintenance should be assessed. Rate as follows:		
– The project will have a significant impact on the creation of new jobs and maintenance of existing employment at a relatively reasonable cost per job.		5
– The project will contribute to some new job creation and maintenance at a relatively higher cost.		4
– The project involves minimal new job creation but will underpin the commercial viability of existing employment.		3
– The project has minimal impact on new job creation or maintenance.		0

## Calls for Projects

A call for proposals under the Seafood Processing Development Measure can be a General call, a Targeted call, or a Specific call.

### General Call

A general call is in respect of projects that seek to advance the overarching aims of the scheme as set out herein. With a General Call, applicants have no guarantee that theirs or any other project will be approved; rather the overall funding allocation to the call may be limited and selection criteria will apply in every case. Thus a General Call is:

- Open to novel projects that address the overarching aims of the Scheme.
- A closing date will apply to all applications.
- Competitive. Applications have no guarantee of success but will be considered against other projects received under the call and on the basis of the published selection criteria; cost-effectiveness; value for money; and overall aims of the scheme and the policy objectives of the CFP and Government.
- Limited. The total funds available to a General Call will, in every case, be limited to an amount pre-determined by the funds available too, and designated by, the implementing authority to the call.

### Targeted Call

A Targeted Call is in respect of projects that, whilst advancing the overarching aims of the scheme, also address one or more priority areas set down in a specific call. In the case of Targeted Calls applicants are free to frame novel projects designed to deliver on the objectives of the call, but are also required to demonstrate their capacity (both individually and as part of a consortium) including the necessary technical expertise, to undertake the project successfully.

- Open to novel projects that address the specific aims of the call.
- Whilst projects that address the overarching aims of the scheme are not, in every case, precluded in a Targeted Call, those projects that address the specific targets of the call will be ranked above those that address the wider aims of the scheme.
- A closing date will apply to all applications.
- Competitive. Applications have no guarantee of success but will be considered against other projects received under the call and on the basis of the published targets, selection criteria; cost-effectiveness; value for money; and overall aims of the scheme and the policy objectives of the CFP and Government.
- Limited. The total funds available to a Targeted Call will, in every case, be limited to an amount pre-determined by the funds available too, and designated by, the implementing authority to the call.

### Specific call

A Specific Call is in respect of a scheme or a sub-scheme only and only in respect of specified items that involve capital or (in certain cases) current investment. In the case of Specific Call applicants are not free to frame novel projects designed to deliver on the objectives of a scheme but must limit their application to the items/areas specified in the call and enumerated on the application form.

Financial aid offered under a Specific Call may not exceed a fixed maximum amount, as specified in the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Regulation (508/2014).

## Terms & Conditions

### General

- 1) The implementing authority for the scheme is Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM).
- 2) The operative date for schemes is from 9th December 2016, unless stated otherwise.
  - Work on the project must not have commenced before an application is received and acknowledged by BIM.
  - Only applications submitted on the official application form will be considered for financial approval.
  - Acknowledgement of an application does not constitute any form of entitlement to any form of financial aid whatsoever nor should the applicant constitute any assistance given by officers of BIM as a form of indication that financial aid will become available.
- 3) Offers of support and claims submission expire within deadlines as specified in the approval notice or automatically within the calendar year.
- 4) The implementing authority reserves the right to alter or amend the conditions of schemes and/or to suspend the schemes or to substitute schemes for different schemes.

### The Applicant

- 5) The applicant must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the implementing authority its legal identity.
- 6) The applicant must demonstrate financial viability (at an organisation or individual level as appropriate).
- 7) The applicant must provide evidence that they are able to manage and carry out the project in a satisfactory manner.
- 8) The applicant is encouraged to provide detailed information on the cost-effectiveness and value for money of the project proposed. Applicants should note that cost-effectiveness and value for money will be assessed in every case during the selection process.
- 9) The applicant must comply with Department of Finance tax clearance procedures, as appropriate, at the time of financial payment.
- 10) Where appropriate the applicant must comply with the provisions of the Data Collection Regulation at the time of financial payment.

### The Application

Applications for financial aid must be submitted to BIM on the official application form, by the specified deadline, together with the following information and attachments.

- a) Title of Project**
- b) Rationale for the Innovative Project or Business Development**
- c) Key objectives of the Project**
- d) Main challenges in the Project**
- e) Expected outcomes and Potential Value**

### Attachments, to include, as appropriate:

- Proof of legal identity: copies of certificates of incorporation or association where applicable.
- Current tax clearance certificate at the time of payment.
- Evidence to support employment figures supplied e.g. copy of payroll etc.
- Quotations for item specified in application.

### Mandatory Requirements

To qualify for financial aid under the Seafood Processing Development Measure the following mandatory requirements must be met in all cases. Applications that fail to meet these criteria will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered further.

- For the purposes of these schemes, qualifying organisations include registered producer organisations, processor associations, other organisations with legal identity and recognised by the implementing authority, and in certain circumstances private companies.
- 11) Applications must be consistent with the European Fisheries Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and National Legislation:
- In every case the proposed project, action and the applicant (and any project partners, or others contracted to, or taking part in the project or action) must comply with the rules of the European Fisheries Maritime Fisheries Fund and all relevant EU regulations, directives, decisions etc.
  - In every case the proposed project or action must be consistent with national Fisheries Policy, and with the objectives of national strategic plans and the Seafood Development Operational Programme 2014-2020.
  - In every case the applicant (and any project partners, or others contracted to, or taking part in the project or action) must comply with all relevant national legislation.
- 12) Applications must be submitted by the deadline set.
- Applications received outside the deadline set will be deemed to have not met the mandatory criteria and will not be further considered.

Applications that do not meet all of the mandatory criteria will be deemed ineligible and will be returned to the applicant with an explanatory memorandum.

### Financial Aid

Projects under the Seafood Processing Development Measure and Schemes are categorised as either public, contributory or private.

The **Business Innovation Approval Committee** (BIAC) shall determine into which category projects fall based in particular on the following considerations:

- Collective versus individual interests;
- Collective versus individual beneficiary (producers' organisations, organisations representing the trade);
- Public access to the results of the operation versus private ownership and control;
- Financial participation by collective bodies and/or research institutions.

Public projects are those considered to be in the collective interest of the fishing and seafood industry and carried out by public bodies and/or research institutions. Such projects will be fully funded and will require full public dissemination of the results.

Contributory/Private projects are those where the applicant bears a varying proportion of the project costs. The overall level of grant aid will be determined by the relative contribution of those elements of the projects that may be considered public (as stated above) or private.

Project Type	National & EU Funding	Required Private Funding
Public	100%	Not applicable
Contributory	Up to 80%	At least 20%
Private	Up to 50%	At least 50%

- 13) Costs for financial aid purposes will only be considered in respect of the items detailed on the application and agreed with the implementing authority (letter of offer – schedule of costs) prior to the project commencing.
- 14) Work carried out directly or indirectly by the applicant or by a company, in which the applicant has an interest, will not be eligible for financial aid.
- 15) Applicants should note that in the event of approval they will be required to submit proof of payment such as copy paid cheques (retrieved from the bank)/bank statements, copy bank drafts, credit card statements or inter bank documentation etc. Cash payments are not eligible for financial aid.
- 16) Applicants should note that any outstanding charges in respect of the applicant due to BIM (Training Fees, etc) must be discharged in full at the time of grant payment.

## Evaluation

In every case the evaluation of proposals will be based on the information provided by the application submitted in reply to a call.

In addition, the implementing authority reserves the right to use any other information from public or specialist sources. All the information will be assessed in the light of the criteria set out in these specifications.

The evaluation for each application will proceed in stages, as described below. Only the applications meeting the requirements of each stage will pass on to the next stage of the evaluation.

The evaluation of all proposals submitted under the Seafood Processing Development Measure and Schemes is managed by the implementing authority. The evaluation process aims to be fair and transparent and to provide constructive feedback to applicants as appropriate.

Evaluation of proposals is based on the following principles:

- Transparency;
- Equality of Treatment;
- Impartiality;
- Efficiency and Speed.

Throughout the entire evaluation process all reasonable measures will be taken to ensure objectivity, fairness, quality and confidentiality.

In accepting and evaluating applications, the implementing authority does not commit funding or imply any commitment to any project or guarantee that funds will be made available to proposals submitted under any call for proposals.

The evaluation process will consist of three stages, namely:

- Completeness, timeliness and mandatory criteria evaluation by BIM;
- Investment evaluation by BIM or external evaluators as appropriate;
- Final approval by the Business Innovation Approval Committee.

### **Completeness, Timeliness and Mandatory Criteria**

Proposals for funding will, in every case, be checked for completeness, timeliness and compliance with all of the mandatory criteria of the scheme. This check will be undertaken by the implementing authority.

#### **Completeness**

This check will ensure that applications are fully completed, including additional information required, in every case.

An application submitted before the deadline of a closed call will be deemed to have been received by “the closing date for all applications under the scheme” but will be deemed to be Technically Incomplete.

Changes to the original application, after the closing date, are expressly forbidden other than in the case of Technical Incompleteness.

An application that is technically incomplete on submission and which does not rectify the incompleteness within the timeframe set out below will be deemed ineligible.

Applications that are deemed technically incomplete will be returned to the applicant with an explanatory memorandum. Applications will be returned:

- In the case of a closed call; within 5 working days of receipt or 5 working days after the closing date call whichever is sooner.
- In the case of an open call; within 10 working days of the date of receipt.

The applicant will be requested to resubmit the completed application form and/or submit the requested outstanding documentation.

Taking into account the need to progress the evaluation of projects in general and the risk of inappropriate delays in the case of returned applications, applicants must resubmit the revised application in full, or the outstanding material in full, by registered post to the implementing authority by 5.00 pm on the 15th working day following the date the original application was returned by the implementing authority.

- In every case the onus is on the applicant to resubmit a revised application or submit additional information as necessary following a verbal or written request by the implementing authority.
- In the event that the resubmission deadline is not met, the implementing authority is not required to contact the applicant further and the application will be deemed ineligible without further notification.

Once a resubmitted completed application form and outstanding documentation have been received the application will be progressed to the next stage of evaluation.

## Timeliness

This check will ensure that applications were received by the closing date/time in the case of a closed call.

Closing dates/deadlines are absolute in the case of a closed call. Non compliance with the closing date/ deadline is deemed to be a breach of the Mandatory Criteria and such applications may not be deemed to be technically incomplete but will be deemed ineligible.

## Mandatory Criteria

An application that is deemed to be complete and to have met the submission deadline of the call will be checked against the Mandatory Criteria of the scheme. Mandatory criteria may vary from scheme to scheme but will, in every case, be clearly indicated in the application form and/or the explanatory information accompanying the application form. An application that does not meet all of the mandatory criteria of the scheme will be deemed ineligible.

## Ineligible Applications

Applications that are deemed ineligible will be returned to the applicant with an explanatory memorandum. Applications will be returned:

- In the case of a closed call; within 10 working days of receipt or 10 working days after the closing date call which ever is sooner.
- In the case of an open call; within 15 working days of the date of receipt.

In respect of eligibility criteria a decision of the implementing authority may be appealed, in writing, to the Management Committee, BIM.

**Confidentiality:** Throughout their work independent experts shall demonstrate the appropriate devotion to duty and observe complete confidentiality of the information and documents brought to their attention.

## Assessment and Selection Criteria

Selection criteria will be used to select applications for funding.

The Business Innovation Approval Committee (BIAC) and Project Manager will assess each project. When assessing the project the selection criteria as shown below will be used. In accordance with the score obtained by the project with respect to the selection criteria, the BIAC shall determine which projects are prioritised for funding.

The BIAC may at its discretion impose additional conditions in the grant offer as appropriate.

Cost-effectiveness of the proposals based on the selection criteria and intended investment will be used to rank projects, where necessary. The decision of the BIAC will be final.



