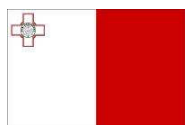


Guidance Notes for submission of:

Applications for funding under LEADER

Action 413.7 Support for the formation of the Foundation of Territorial Rangers for the Majjistral territory

This measure which falls under the **Project** category under the programme LEADER of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Malta 2007 – 2013, is part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and falls under the responsibility of the Ministry for Sustainable Development, Environment and Climate Change.



Rural Development Programme for Malta (2007–2013)
Programme 'LEADER'
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe Investing in Rural Areas
Co-Financing Rate:
80% European Union, 20% Government of Malta



Rationale for intervention

Action 413.7

With the systematic movement of people towards the need for nature life, the importance of protecting and safeguarding the natural assets of our region has become imperative. Moreover, the Majjstral region boasts of many open spaces that offer the possibility to the community to be more in touch with nature. By introducing an element of management and control, this need for outdoor activities can be addressed in a sustainable manner.

The aim of this action is to offer financial assistance for the costs associated with the initial setup of a Foundation composed of Territorial Rangers. The purpose of these rangers will be to manage, supervise and facilitate the interaction of the community with outdoor life and enable them to live outdoor experiences, without causing damage to the land and environment in the Majjstral region. The objective of this action is therefore to mobilize and create a set up for voluntary persons towards the provision of certain regional services that currently are not being offered. This action also aims to bring together different actors from different sectors.

The proposed open call is designed to provide small-scale financial support to the entity/entities setting up the (one) Foundation of Territorial Rangers in order to be able to start functioning.

The Foundation will take on various roles including those of management of recreational outdoor areas, cleaning of valleys as well as acting as educators for the environment and protection of the flora and fauna in the region. Through this action, MAGF seeks to address various key environmental issues existing within its localities. Moreover, these services will be highly beneficial to the various Local Councils within the Majjstral territory which after the set up of this Foundation will be encouraged further to embellish open spaces that fall within their territory and use the services of this Foundation to make good use of their land by giving a managed service to the community.

Scope and Objectives of the Foundation

The scope of the Foundation of Territorial Rangers must be that of :

- Increasing awareness and understanding of the main assets of the territory and the key environmental issues relevant to the Majjstral territory
- offering a managed service to Local Councils and other entities for the management of recreational outdoor areas and management of outdoor activities
- restoration of valleys

- encouraging the community to live outdoor experiences and be more in touch with nature in an era where life is fast moving
- creating social cohesion and interaction amongst the communities involved within the Foundation of Territorial Rangers.
- To offer opportunities for persons to participate actively in such a programme by becoming members of such foundation. This will offer a platform for social interaction, even between different partners, representing different sectors.

The Foundation, being a not-for-profit organisation, must aim to offer its services on a voluntary basis – this however does not prohibit it from generating revenue from certain activities or services so that it may sustain itself on a long term basis.

Scope and Objectives of this Action

The scope of Action 413.7 is to enable the Foundation to obtain the necessary set up in order to allow it to start its operations and reach the above objectives efficiently and effectively.

Eligibility Actions

Operations supported through the EAFRD albeit consistent with the strategic objectives of the National policies and with the Majjistral Local Development Strategy, and shall be limited to small scale support for capital expenditures of the Foundation, marketing costs of the Foundation and other costs associated with educational role of the Foundation. Groups of individuals and/or entities having a social and environmental interest in the Majjistral territory only can apply for this action. Entity/entities wishing to apply for this action must be located within the Majjistral Action Group Foundation territory.

The rural localities within the Majjistral Action Group Foundation territory are:

Rural Localities within the Majjistral Action Group Foundation territory		
Il-Mellieħa	San Pawl il-Baħar	L-Imgarr
In-Naxxar	L-Ikkin	Hal-Lija

Hal Gharghur	Il-Mosta	Haż-Żebbuġ
Is-Siġġiewi	Had Dingli	L-Imdina
L-Imtarfa	Ir-Rabat	San Ġwann
H'Attard		

Eligibility Criteria

- the proposed project is located within the Majjistral Action Group Foundation territory;
- the proposed project educates and increases the awareness about the environmental assets of the Majjistral territory and increases the sensitivity of the community to the sustainable use of these assets;
- the proposed project offers a managed service to the Majjistral's communities and Local Councils in the upkeep of the environmental assets within the territory including the restoration of valleys;
- the proposed project offers a managed service to Local Councils and other entities operating within MAGF's territory for the management of outdoor recreational areas and outdoor activities;
- the proposed project fits within the scope of the actions listed under the measure.

Description of the requirements and targets

The applicant is required to demonstrate that the proposed investment will improve the sustainability of the environmental assets within the territory through the operations of the Foundation of Territorial Rangers. The applicant must prove how it will create awareness and education about the environment and offer organisational services to entities within the territory for the maintenance, upkeep and management of open area spaces and outdoor recreational areas and even for the organisation of certain activities such as socio-cultural ones. The applicant is also required to demonstrate how the Foundation will be promoted.

The applicant must clearly indicate within its business plan the specific targets detailing type of service that it will be offering to different stakeholders on an annual basis.

Eligible investments

The following is the list of Eligible investments supported under Action 413.7:

1. Costs related to the setting up of the Foundation including notarial and registration fees ; Small scale interventions to premises from where the Foundation of Territorial Rangers will be operating; Purchase of fixtures and fittings such as furniture for the offices; Purchase of capital equipment such as office equipment to be used for the operations of the Foundation; Purchase of uniforms;
 2. Marketing and communication costs associated with the promotion of the Foundation of Territorial Rangers including also costs of animator;
 3. Educational costs such as training for the members of the Foundation and expenses related to educational activities;
- and must be line with the Eligibility Criteria outlined on page 3 and 4 of the Guidance Notes.

Non Eligible Investments under Action 413.3

The following is an indicative list of non-eligible investment under Action 413.7

- Purchase of land and buildings;
- Leasing of land and buildings;
- Currency exchange losses;
- Purchase of means of transportation;
- Provisional installations that are not directly related to the investment (e.g. warehouses for keeping materials for the construction);
- Expenditures made before the launch of the call for the application i.e. expenditure incurred before 30th October 2013;
- Taxes or other operational costs of the entity applying for the project, including provisions for possible future losses or debts and any interest owed;
- Inputs which are the subject of a contribution in kind (e.g. land, immovable property whether in its entirety or in part, durable capital goods and raw materials);
- Operational Costs (salaries, insurance obligations and running costs);
- Simple replacement operations; and

- The purchase costs of second-hand equipment.
- Recoverable Value Added tax.
- Architect fees
- Contingencies

Type of beneficiaries

The beneficiaries eligible for funding under Action 413.7 are all legal entities including NGO's and legally constituted groups and associations (such as Producer Organisations, Cooperatives and Associations) which aim to satisfy all the roles designated to the Foundation of Territorial Rangers (page 2 and 3 of the Guidance Notes).

Aid intensities

A beneficiary will be granted the following financial assistance should the proposed investment be selected:

- up to 80% of the total eligible expenditure.

Financing- Budget

The sum of € 176,000 is allocated to Action 413.7 under the Leader Programme for Malta 2007-2013. 80% of this sum will be financed through the EARFD whilst the remaining 20% will be financed by the Government of Malta.

The VAT component must be borne by the applicant unless this is unrecoverable.

Obligations

- The applicant is bound to maintain the project as a going concern for a minimum of five (5) years from the date of completion of the project. Failure to do so will result in penalties being applied and money to be recovered.

- Ownership or title to the location of the project (or part of the project) cannot be changed within five (5) years from the date of completion of the project without the prior written approval of the Majjistral Action Group Foundation.
- Ownership or title to the project (or part of the project) cannot be changed within five (5) years from the date of completion of the project without the prior written approval of the Majjistral Action Group Foundation. This means that applicant has to maintain the execution of the different tasks that it will be delivering as a Foundation of Territorial Rangers for the above timeframe as a minimum. Also, the applicant has to retain ownership of anything purchased with the LEADER funds for the same timeframe as a minimum.
- The entity selected must disburse the total funds allocated to it under this action within 12 months of the date of the signing of the contract with MSDEC. The date when the beneficiary will have submitted the final payment claim will be considered as the final disbursement date. Failure to do so will result in penalties being applied.
- The chosen entity must ensure that all activities are carried out in compliance with national rules and any other mandatory requirements as laid down in the Rural Development Programme for Malta (2007-2013). Failure to do so will result in an obligation from the part of the chosen entity to reimburse any grants received plus interest accrued according to law, and any penalties applicable will be enforced.
- The adjudicated entity is to procure all project activities by issuing an expression of interest for the procurement of each good and each service. Following the expression of interest, the contracted entity must present the quotations collected for each activity to MAGF. A minimum of 3 quotations must be presented and the lowest quotation must be chosen.

The eligibility start date of Action 413.7 is the 30th October 2013. **MAGF** will accept applications under this Action as from the **30th October 2013** and the deadline for submission of applications is the **16th December 2013, noon**.

Selection Criteria

An evaluation of the quality of proposals, including the financial information, will be carried out in accordance with the selection criteria set out in the Selection Criteria Grid below.

Action 413.7 Support for the formation of the Foundation of Territorial Rangers for the Majjstral territory

	CRITERIA	POINTS
1	Number of various services that will be offered by the entity	2 points for every service offered. Maximum 14 points.
2	Frequency of services that will be offered by the entity to different stakeholders	5 points
3	Diversity of partners from different sectors teaming up to form the Foundation	2 points for every different partner. Maximum 6 points.
2	Social, environmental and educational ¹ interest in the Majjstral territory	10 points
3	Number of youth (aged 30 years or under) within the entity or group proposing the project	1 point for every youth. Maximum 5 points.
4	Quality of business plan of the entity/organization applying for the project	15 points
5	Proposed project contributes to the implementation of the Majjstral Local Development Strategy	10 points
6	Sustainability of the project	15 points
7	Readiness of project proposal	10 points
8	Overall quality of the project proposal (application)	10 points

To be considered for funding or to be placed on the reserve list, a project must pass all the Eligibility Criteria and must also obtain a minimum of 50 marks out of the total marks allocated to the Selection Criteria.

¹ In this action, education with respect to the environmental element is being considered.