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European Structural and Investment Funds

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government – European Maritime and Fisheries Fund 2014-2020

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Standard Costs Scheme (SCS)

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Introduction

In response to feedback from the Fishing Industry in Wales, Welsh Government has developed and implement a Standard Cost Scheme specifically for:

- Support for Investments on Board Fishing Vessels – Measure 1.8, Article 32; Health and Safety
- Investment on Board Vessels – Measure 1.22. Article 42; Added Value and Product Quality

The new scheme has been designed to provide a simplified application process for health and safety equipment, and equipment which will add value to a catch, and help fishermen in Wales access grant funding for this equipment more readily by offering a simple online application form and a pre-determined list of available equipment with standardised costs.

The EMFF full application route is still available for small scale coastal fishermen, as well as those with proposals for projects on a larger scale. The SCS meets Welsh Government and EMFF priorities by:

- Promoting sustainable, resource efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge based fisheries:
  Focus on innovation and added value, promoting resource efficient, competitive fisheries which are more selective, produce less discards and do less damage to marine ecosystems.

- Fostering resource efficient, innovative, and competitive and knowledge based aquaculture:
  For an aquaculture sector that is resource efficient and competitive; to help such businesses to become economically viable and competitive.

The objectives of the scheme are to increase investment in improving the safety of the fishing industry, and to increase the value added to Welsh fish.

What's available through the grant?

The grant covers investments in health and safety equipment and equipment which will add value to a catch. The equipment that has been pre-identified offers clear and quantifiable benefits to your fishing business.

A standardised cost has been issued for each item, and there are over 60 items available.

A full list of items that may be applied for through each application form can be found in the List of Eligible Items, on the Welsh Government website:

https://beta.gov.wales/fisheries-standard-costs-scheme-list-items-eligible-funding

In respect of **Shellfish Pots** – only eligible to be claimed if vessel is owned or part owned.

What is Standard Cost?

A standard cost has been calculated for each item available through the SCS. This means that if you apply for the grant, you will know exactly how much grant you will receive (if the total is within the funding limits and the application is successful).

It also means that you will not be required to submit quotations for items before purchasing them, nor will you be required to offer a project plan for their investment.

The grant amount is made up of contributions from the EU, co-finance to the EU funds from Welsh Government, and monies from other government departments and agencies, and a number of other sources. **You must secure the remainder of the funding from non-public funds.** If other EU or UK public funds are obtained to support the costs of an investment they will be discounted against the EMFF grant.

What is the funding limit?

The minimum grant per application is £800 and the maximum overall grant is £24,000.

Owners of vessels with an overall length of 11.99 meters or less will attract an 80% grant rate, and those vessels 11.99 meters (including those using towed fishing gear) will attract a 50% grant rate.

Applications that do not meet the respective minimum grant values will not be considered.

Note: **If your application is approved, all items applied for must be purchased in order for you to claim the funding. If you do not purchase all items that were approved on your application, your claim will be rejected and you will not receive any funding for the items you have purchased.**

How do you start the application process?

First of all you will need to register with Government Gateway to obtain a Government Gateway registration number. You will then need to register with Rural Payments Wales Online (RPW Online) and create an RPW Online account. A guide to the registration process entitled RPW Online: Getting Started, can be found on the Welsh Government website.

https://beta.gov.wales/rpw-online-getting-started

What are the eligibility criteria to apply?

To be eligible to apply, you must:

- Be the owner of a fishing vessel that is on the European Union (EU) fishing fleet register, and administered by the Welsh Government from a port in Wales
- A small scale coastal fishers (not using towed gear)
- owners of vessels that are over 11.99 meters (including those using towed fishing gear)
- Have carried out fishing activity at sea for at least 60 days during the two calendar years preceding your application;
- Have a business turnover of £200,000 or less for the most recent financial year.

Note: In order to receive the SCS payment you must submit a letter from your accountant confirming your business turnover for the most recent financial year and that accounts are available when you submit your claim. Following receipt of your application the Welsh Government will check that you have met the fishing activity criteria. If checks confirm

that you have not met the criteria we will request that you submit documentary proof to confirm that you have met the fishing activity requirement. . Acceptable documents include:

- Sales notes or buyers receipts
- Shellfish Licence Catch Returns (MSAR)
- Log Book Returns
- Fin fish Returns (Fishing Vessels 10m and under)
- Diaries

How can you apply and claim for the SCS?

Applications and claims for the SCS are submitted through RPW Online. All applications will be considered once the application window has closed.

If your application is successful you will be offered a contract, which must be accepted within 30 days.

You must accept your contract before purchasing your items.

You will then have up to 120 days from the date the contract is offered to purchase the items, and submit a claim for item(s) that have been purchased.

You will also be required to submit scanned copies of the relevant invoices using your RPW Online account or submit original invoices at your RPW Divisional Office.

If your application is successful, you are required to purchase **ALL** of the items which are listed in your contract. Failure to do so will mean the claim is not eligible.

You must submit a single claim for the total grant amount, and submit all invoices for purchased items at the same time, after the final item has been purchased.

Can I submit a paper copy of the invoices?

Yes. You can submit the original paper invoices by visiting their RPW Divisional Office. They will be scanned and returned to you during the visit.

Why do I have 120 days to purchase the items and make a claim?

We are holding a number of application windows for the Scheme and require all items to be purchased and claimed for the previous window before the process begins for the next application window.

All the items must be available for inspection when you submit your invoices. You may be selected for inspection before the payment is made. If the items are not available for inspection, no payment will be made and your **whole claim will be rejected**.

Am I able to withdraw my application after it has been submitted?

A. Yes, during an open application window

You can withdraw your application by contacting the Customer Contact Centre on 0300 062 5004 and requesting a withdrawal of your application.

You may submit a new application before the window closes.

B. Yes, after an application window has closed BUT before you have received the contract.

You can withdraw your application by contacting the Customer Contact Centre on 0300 062 5004 and requesting a withdrawal of your application.

If you have selected the wrong items or have changed your mind about the items that you have selected or have missed items that you wanted to select, you must withdraw your application and apply again in the next window.

Please remember that funding for the scheme is limited and if it is depleted, further application windows may not be available.

C. Once my application has been approved and I have received a contract for SCS, can changes be made to the items requested?

No. We cannot accept changes to the kinds of items requested.

You can buy the same items of a higher (better) specification, but you will receive the same amount of grant funding. This is the only permitted change.

When will future application windows open?

Once the window closes, the remaining amount of unallocated funding will be assessed. If funding permits, a further window will be announced in due course.

Is there any more information available?

The application form and scheme rules and guidance are available on the Welsh Government website:
https://beta.gov.wales/support-health-and-safety-investments-board-fishing-vessels-standard-costs-items