

European Innovation Partnerships (EIP)

Michael Creed TD, Minister for Agriculture, Food & the Marine launched the **European Innovation Partnerships initiative (EIP)** under the Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020 at National Rural Networks Annual Conference on Friday 14th October 2016.

The European Innovation Partnerships initiative (EIP) under the Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020 comes under the remit of REGULATION (EU) No 1305/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

Total funding of €59 million is available for funding of EIP operational groups to implement Innovative Projects that contribute to Rural Development Priorities

EIP involves cooperation of:

- farmers,
- scientists,
- advisors,
- NGOs and
- others

coming together in operational groups to address a specific issue or to take advantage of a new opportunity. The ultimate aim of these

innovation partnerships is to road-test new ideas and practices which can then be used more widely by farmers and others to improve productivity, enhance resource efficiency and pursue sustainable farming practices.

Rural Development Priorities:

All EIPs must demonstrate links to Rural Development priorities set down in EU Regulation 1305/2013 under Article 5 (2),(3), (4), and (5):

(2) enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests, with a focus on the following areas:

- (a) improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification;
- (b) facilitating the entry of adequately skilled farmers into the agricultural sector and, in particular, generational renewal.

(3) promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture, with a focus on the following areas:

- (a) improving competitiveness of primary producers by better integrating them into the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and organisations and inter-branch organisations;
- (b) supporting farm risk prevention and management.

(4) restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry, with a focus on the following areas:

- (a) restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas, and in areas facing natural or other specific constraints, and high nature value farming, as well as the state of European landscapes;
- (b) improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management;

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(c) preventing soil erosion and improving soil management.

(5) promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors, with a focus on the following areas:

- (a) increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture;
- (b) increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing;
- (c) facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by-products, wastes and residues and of other non food raw material, for the purposes of the bio- economy;
- (d) reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture;
- (e) fostering carbon conservation and sequestration in agriculture and forestry;

EIP Process:

- First Round
 - Initial Proposal Call for applications

- Scheduled to Open (November 2016)
- Prepare and submit Application
- Projects Short-listing

- Second Round
 - Prepare & Submit detailed Operational Group Project Plan
 - Project Approval of detailed Project Operational Plan
 - Implementation of more detailed project plan

Article 57 (3) of 1305/2013 Operational groups shall disseminate the results of their projects, in particular, through the EIP network, and through the National Rural Network.

Additional Articles of REGULATION (EU) No 1305/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of relevance:

Articles 35

Article 55

Article 57

Available at:

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/farmingschemesandpayments/commonagriculturalpolicycap/finaltextoncapreform/RuralDevelopment130513.pdf>

Further information:

Ireland Rural Development Programme at:
www.agriculture.gov.ie

Further information on EIP at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/>

Further information on EIP Scheme Process can be obtained from:

- Locally Led Scheme Section, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford. Lo-Call Number 076 1064454, email locallyled@agriculture.gov.ie.
- General EIPs Innovation Unit, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Portlaoise. Telephone 076 1064557, email EIP@agriculture.gov.ie