

Kilkenny Leader Partnership, Laois Partnership Company & North Tipperary Development Company: Request for Tender **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/115709>)**



The TRU Project **SMART TOWN – SMART REGION**

Introduction

Kilkenny Leader Partnership, Laois Partnership Company and North Tipperary Development Company are the local development companies for Co Kilkenny, Co Laois and Co Tipperary respectively. They are responsible for the delivery of a range of rural enterprise, social inclusion and community development initiatives in their respective areas.

The three companies are keen to collaborate on a capacity building initiative for three rural towns in each of their areas – namely Templemore (Co Tipperary); Rathdowney (Co Laois) and Urlingford (Co Kilkenny).

The initiative will focus on an action plan for the shared hinterlands. The plan will focus on the opportunities and challenges of this region with the aim of developing a connected, sustainable, community-driven strategy for the next five years. This work is being carried out within the framework of the **EU Smart Villages Programme**.

Smart Villages are communities in rural areas that use innovative solutions to improve their resilience, building on local strengths and opportunities and it will be expected that those appointed to carry out this work will have regard to the nature and purpose of that programme in the approaches adopted. Strict adherence by all aspects of the model will not necessarily be required.

About the Settlements

- **Rathdowney** is a vibrant rural town, recognized for its community spirit and agricultural background.
- **Templemore** is a bustling town with a rich history, often referred to as the gateway to the Slieve Bloom Mountains.
- **Urlingford** is a historic market town, known for its scenic surroundings and local heritage.

Objective of the Initiative

There are three key objectives of this initiative

1. A training and development objective with a focus on scoping development opportunities in the shared area.
 2. Identification of projects that can be progressed by local actors/communities.
 3. The collaborative arrangements in the region that will support a coherent approach to the development opportunities in the area.
- Since this is a training initiative, the primary goal of the project is to build the skills and knowledge of the three communities with regard to Smart Village processes. This planning process may be carried out separately in each of the three communities or may include shared teaching sessions. It will also include joint workshops to explore shared challenges, opportunities, and potential cross-county collaboration.
 - The primary output is the development of cohesive opportunities for the region for specific projects (these could be tourism, environmental, etc) using the Smart Villages Framework.
 - Learning to work in cross-community collaboration both in the plan preparation and in future project implementation will be another objective.

Key elements of this approach include:

- **Collaboration:** Identifying common themes across the three towns and their shared hinterlands, exploring collective opportunities for complementary development; potentially in the areas of community and small business participation in tourism, biodiversity and renewable energy projects.
- **Resource Opportunity:** Leveraging the collective strengths of the towns to create a funding sub-region which can be used to secure better funding and resource allocation to the towns' common benefit. A Smart Region approach based on a scaling of the 'Smart Village' concept and lessons of the REDZ methodology of communities having shared cross-administrative boundary interests. Review of the three towns respective town/community plans will assist this.

Process Overview and Deliverables

The process and its deliverables will be as follows:

1. **Training and facilitation:** will occur over a **three-month period**, with timelines agreed upon in advance with each funding partner and the successful tenderer.
2. **Capacity Building:** Community representatives will be supported in building their capacity to plan, identify actions, consult stakeholders and engage in effective collaborative, community-based planning.
3. **Action Plan Development:** A **smart community-focused plan** will be created for each settlement, and their shared hinterlands, containing specific goals, outcomes and strategic actions, as well as specific projects and their indicative costs.
4. **Collaboration Opportunities:** A thorough analysis will be conducted to identify areas for potential collaboration between the three communities, including funding opportunities and shared initiatives. This will include inter-community visits with one community visit taking place in each location and which will include visits to community projects and a joint planning session. Investigate the collective approach across the SMART region and how this presents an opportunity to attract additional resources.
5. **Identify potential for Just Transition or other funding streams.**
6. **A TRU project report:** on the process and the outcome for each area, and the region collectively, that can be delivered to the three local development companies for their further use.

Tender proposals should include

1. Contact name and business name of the proposer.
2. Relevant skills, qualifications and expertise of the individuals who propose to carry out the work required including experience of undertaking similar pieces or work.
3. At least two referees, from similar projects.
4. Outline of the methodology for the project.
5. Evidence of tax clearance compliance.
6. Full costs for the completion of the project with a breakdown of number of days required, daily rates for each individual and any other associated costs.

Proposal cost should not exceed 36,000.

Selection and Award Criteria

Assessment of tenders will be based on a score of 100 (max) and will be divided as follows:

- **Structure and quality of the proposal** - Demonstrated understanding of the project scope, including its Smart Village context, clear plan for execution, and meeting all requirements. - **20**
- **Relevant skills, experience and qualifications** - Proven experience working with similar community groups, particularly within the community and voluntary sector. Capacity to deliver within the given timeframe. - **25**
- **Methodology and approach** Clearly identify methodology for engagement with communities. - **20**
- **Knowledge of Government Programmes:** Familiarity with local, regional, and national government programmes that may be relevant to the project. - **20**
- **Tender price and value for money** - **15**
- **Total** - **100**

Ownership of Documents and Copyright

The contract for this project will be held with Laois Partnership Company. All information gathered during this tender process, the planning process, and the final report, will remain the property of the three partner agencies.

Submission of Tenders

Tenders may be submitted by email to leader@laoispartnership.ie (<mailto:leader@laoispartnership.ie>) on or before the deadline of **Friday 6th June at 5pm**. Please use the subject line "TRU project tender".

Late submissions will not be accepted.



Region

Co Tipperary / Co Laois / Co Kilkenny

Date Entered/Updated

19th May, 2025

Expiry Date

6th Jun, 2025

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