

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
FOR
THE DIRECT ASSISTANCE GRANT SCHEME**

- Q1: How does one apply for funds under the Direct Assistance Grant Scheme (DAGS)?
A1: Applications are available from Caribbean Export's website at www.carib-export.com. This is the only source for application forms and official documents re: DAGS
- Q2: What is the deadline for Applications?
A2: The deadline for Applications is June 11, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. (Barbados Time). The deadline is stated on the Guidelines and Application Forms. **The deadline is final.**
- Q3: How long is the evaluation process?
A3: The duration of the evaluation process is sixty-five (65) working days commencing the next working day after the deadline of the Call for Proposal. All applications submitted under this Call will be evaluated by Members of the Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee comprises of The Office of the Deputy Regional Authorizing Officer (DRAO) - Barbados and Caribbean Export. Refer to Section 4 of the Guidelines for further details.
- Q4: Can goods (e.g. equipment, tools etc.) and services (e.g. consultant, etc.) be purchased from Non-African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP), European Union (EU) member countries, the USA and Canada?
A4: Yes, all goods and services can be purchased from suppliers and service providers operating in African, Caribbean and Pacific States, European Union Member countries, and Non-ACP countries such as Canada and the USA.
- Q5: Does the Direct Assistance Grant Scheme advance funds for projects?
A5: No funds are advanced to beneficiaries of a grant. Funds are only reimbursed to Beneficiaries of a grant on completion of their project activities and submission of the requisite support documentation, such as Payment Request Letter, Final Narrative Report, Final Financial Report, Grant Assessment Report, Original Invoices, Proof of Payment, etc.
- Q6: When are applicants notified of Caribbean Export's decision?
A6: On completion of the Evaluation Process, Caribbean Export will inform all applicants of the status of their applications; rejected or approved. Caribbean Export's decision to reject an application or not to award a grant is final. Rejected applicants may request in writing from Caribbean Export their score and the reasons for the application being rejected.
- Q7: Do applicants have to incur the cost of their projects directly?
A7: Yes, applicants have to incur the full cost of their project activities and then seek reimbursement from Caribbean Export. Funds are only reimbursed to Beneficiaries of a grant on completion of their project activities and submission of the requisite support documentation

such as Payment Request Letter, Final Narrative Report, Final Financial Report, Grant Assessment Report, Original Invoices, Proof of Payment, etc.

Q8: Does the grant cover activities that have already been undertaken?

A8: No, there is no retroactivity; activities undertaken or costs incurred before the applicant is awarded a grant are not eligible for reimbursement.

Q9: Are the last two (2) years financial statements required to be submitted with an application?

A9: Yes, eligibility requirements state that all applicants are required to provide the last two (2) years financial statements to demonstrate their financial capacity to finance their proposed project activities. Therefore, any applicant that does not provide the required financial statements, their application will be rejected.

Q10: Are Start-ups eligible to apply?

A10: No, Start-ups are not eligible to apply. Start-ups are defined as firms that have been in operation less than two (2) years.

Q11: Does the 6-month implementation period occur at any time during the year following funding, or must it come immediately upon receiving a grant?

A11: The implementation period takes effect on the day following the date of the last signature on the contract. The 6-month implementation period is the time the Beneficiary has to undertake the proposed project or action for a Grant issued under the Direct Assistance Grant Scheme.

Q12: I started this professional service 3 years ago but was focusing on the developmental aspects and was only legally registered as a firm 6 months ago. How will my application be handled?

A12: The Direct Assistance Scheme requires your business to be legally registered, which it is, so you satisfy the legally registered criteria. Additionally, all applicants must submit 2 years financial statements. Therefore, your company must be operating for at least 2 years, which can be confirmed by the requisite financial statements.

Q13: How are funds disbursed after an applicant has been awarded a grant?

A13: Funds are only reimbursed to a beneficiary for activities undertaken and completed during the implementation period of the signed grant contract. Additionally, costs can only be incurred or be eligible for reimbursement when Caribbean Export has officially approved an application and signed a grant contract with the applicant (the beneficiary).

Q14: How many reimbursements are there?

A14: The Grant allows for two reimbursements, an interim and final.

Q15: What exchange rates should be used to calculate the budget?

A15: The Exchange Rates published by the European Commission should be used to prepare your budget and facilitate the conversion from your jurisdictions' currency to Euros. The website address is:

<http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm?fuseaction=countries&Language=en>

Q16: What is contribution in kind?

A16: Contributions in kind (Payments made in the form of goods and services, rather than cash) made by the beneficiary do not represent actual expenditure and are not eligible costs.

Q17: Are taxes (e.g. VAT, GCT, etc.) paid by the Direct Assistance Scheme?

A17: No. Taxes are not eligible for reimbursement.

Q18: Are non-registered firms, individuals, companies eligible to apply for assistance under the Direct Assistance Grant?

A18: No, only legally registered individuals, companies, firms in a CARIFORUM Country are eligible to apply. CARIFORUM Countries are Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

Q19: Can applicants request their scores if they are not successful?

A19: Applicants may request their scores in writing from Caribbean Export if they are not successful.

Q20: If my application is not successful, can I apply to the next Call for Proposals?

A20: Yes, you can submit a revised or new application when the next Call is published.

Q21: Can a group of companies or a parent company submit financial statements for a subsidiary?

A21: No, the subsidiary must submit their financial statements.

Q22: Can a Business Support Organisation (BSO) apply?

A22: No, BSOs are not allowed to apply. Refer to Section 2.1 of the Guidelines for further details.

Q23: How many applications can an applicant submit?

A23: Firms can submit one application per Call for Proposals

Q24: Are the grants processed and approved on a first-come, first-serve basis or are all the applications held to be processed after deadline?

A24: No, all applications submitted for a Call will be evaluated after the deadline at the same time by Members of the Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee comprises of the Deputy Regional Authorizing Officer (DARO) – Barbados and Caribbean Export.

Q25: Can equipment and software used for an engineering practice be included?

A25: Yes

Q26: Is in-house training by an external expert also eligible?

A26: Yes

Q27: Does being in business for over two years but only recently registered still qualify to apply?

A27: Yes.

- Q28: If interim financing for Grant portion of Project is in place, what do you require for the other 30% - given a probable start date of September 2019? I have clients who could finance out of earnings.
- A28: Applicants must be able to finance and sustain their projects fully at the beginning; that is 100% financing is available prior to project initiation. Projections are not accepted.
- Q29: Is a Justice of the Peace stamp and signature on copy of registration OK?
- A29: No, a copy must be notarized by a Notary Public.
- Q30: Should Applicant Declaration be certified by a Justice of the Peace?
- A30: No.
- Q31: Will there be an opportunity to submit interim claims?
- A31: Yes, beneficiaries will have two (2) opportunities to submit a claim; an interim and final.
- Q32: The Department of Co-operatives and Friendly Societies (DCFS), is an agency within the Ministry of Industry, Investment & Commerce and is the only way for Cooperatives to Register. Will this suffice for DAGS?
- A32: A Government Agency enacted by an Act of Parliament would be considered as being legally registered. The Agency will have to validate this by submitting a copy of the Act of Parliament.
- Q33: Does it matter whether the goods or services originates from the USA or Canada or any other non- ACP or EU member country?
- A33: No, the Rules of Origin do not apply.
- Q34: My project calls for two people to travel to another country. Are claims for two plane tickets eligible?
- A34: No, air travel and per diem are ineligible. Refer to Section 2.3 Ineligible Projects/Costs of the Guidelines & Procedures of the Grant.
- Q35: A family member has agreed to loan the funds once the application has been approved, do I send their bank account as proof of available funds?
- A35: No, you should present the funds in your bank account statement.
- Q36: Will the grant cover courses offered by certification agencies in Canada such as Forensic Accounting?
- A36: Yes, training for certification courses is an eligible activity, but note individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses are not eligible. Refer to Section 2.3 Ineligible Projects/Costs of the Guidelines & Procedures of the Grant.
- Q37: Business name was changed in 2017. Would it be ok to send a certificate of the change of name or do you need original and the change of name certificate?
- A37: You will only be required to submit the current certificate of registration or incorporation.

- Q38: Would the purchase of a new building and retrofitting it qualify for the grant?
- A38: The purchase of a new building would not be eligible. However, retrofitting a building or structure would be an eligible activity. Refer to Section 2.2 Eligible Projects/Costs of the Guidelines & Procedures of the Grant.
- Q39: Is training for individual staff in the US eligible under the program?
- A39: No, individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses are not eligible. Refer to Section 2.3 Ineligible Projects/Costs of the Guidelines & Procedures of the Grant.
- Q40: I am currently filling out the form for the Grant Scheme but I am not too clear one of the questions (2.6) which asks to indicate any specific added value elements – can you assist and elaborate a little more, so I can see if I am on the current path?
- A40: Added value elements refer to whether or not your project will:
- Involve promotion or alliance of public/private partnerships
 - Be innovative and utilise industry best practices
 - Control or prevent environmental issues
 - Promote gender equality and equal opportunities, through job creation.
- Q41: Can you please provide some urgent feedback as it relates to whether the financial statements which should be provided in the application process should be audited statements?
- A41: Financial Statements do not need to be audited. We accept audited financial statements, as well as unaudited financial statements and financial statements prepared by an accountant or accounting software.
- Q42: Could you clarify, if I had a project that was €42,860 and I applied for the grant of €30,000. This would represent 70% of the project cost. Is this OK?
- A42: Yes, this amount would be accepted as the maximum amount to be awarded under the Grant Procedures facility is €30,000.
- Q43: We are a locally registered Caribbean Consulting Company. However, on the project in question we may employ/consult with another Caribbean consulting company that has Canadian specialist/consultants for their opinion in certain areas. They will not be working directly for our company that is applying for the grant. Would this be considered buying services from Canada?
- A43: No, however beneficiaries are allowed to purchase goods and services from outside of ACP States and European Countries.
- Q44: We are being financed by an investment company from the UK; am I correct that all we need is a letter from them with their approval of the financing for the project? i.e. the money does not have to be in our bank statements?

- A44: An official letter from the UK investment company confirming the actual dollar amount to be funded would be acceptable.
- Q45: Should pro forma invoices for any equipment to be purchased be scanned and attached?
A45: No, not to the application.
- Q46: Should funds available for project financing be in the company's account or can it be in the account of one of the directors/Senior Management?
A46: Yes, the funds should be in the company's account. The Director/Senior Management may submit their account information on behalf of the company, but their position within the company would need to be confirmed in writing.
- Q47: Is there a specified font size and paper type? Say A4 versus letter?
A47: No
- Q48: Preparing a proposal, I come up with a question. In my case There is a very important / essential workshop related to proposed investments, that is very specific and only given in the USA. Taking this workshop would give my proposal better body. Would it be possible to bring this up? In case 'no' would there be a possibility to go around the fact that it is held in the USA. Let's say I would pay a trainings agency here, who then sends me to the USA?
A48: A Grant may not be awarded retrospectively...meaning Caribbean Export will only reimburse amounts spent after the grant contract is signed.
- Q49: Would software with hardware solutions supplied by a local service provider but who in turn sourced online from a supplier in the United States qualify as project activity for funding?
A49: Yes, goods and services may be purchased from suppliers operating in African, Caribbean and Pacific Member States, European Union Member countries and Non-ACP countries such as Canada and the USA.
- Q50: Does DAGS consider the provision of services through tour operators as an export of services even though much of it is administered in and around host country but being enjoyed by international visitors?
A50: Yes, DAGS consider the provision of services through tour operators as an export of services even though much of it is administered in and around the host country but being enjoyed by international visitors.
- Q51: We do not have Notary Public in Jamaica. We Have Justices of the Peace (JP). FAQ response says this not acceptable. Don't know what to do.
A51: As stated in Section 4 of the application form, Notarized copies of the Certificate of Registration or Incorporation are required. Yes, there are Notary Publics in Jamaica; you may wish to contact a local law firm to recommend one. Documentation verified by Justices of the Peace is not acceptable.

- Q52: If the entity has not been trading directly, but has been operating and accompanies productive groups can apply?
- A52: The eligibility criteria state the company/firm must be legally registered and have two (2) years financial statements.
- Q53: The first question is about training of our film crew. We are embarking on the production of a new film. However, we have 6 Film Industry professionals from the USA who we would like to come to Barbados to do some hands-on training on our film set while we are in production. This, we believe will greatly improve our project. Would this be an eligible program for DAG?
- A53: Yes, Training of the film crew would be an eligible activity under the Direct Assistance Grant Scheme. Please note that all goods and services (e.g. Training) may be purchased from suppliers operating in African, Caribbean and Pacific Member States, European Union Member countries and Non-ACP countries such as Canada and the USA.
- Q54: The next question has to do with Film Production Costs. Can we seek to get assistance for the production of the entire film production through DAG since we are manufacturing a product (the film) that will be exported throughout the Caribbean, USA, and England etc?
- A54: Yes. Refer to Section 2.2 Eligible Projects/Costs of the Guidelines & Procedures of the Grant.
- Q55: Can we apply for more than one project?
- A55: A project may have multiple activities. Please note that each applicant may submit only one application per facility.
- Q56: Is the procurement of packaging materials such as bottles and labels eligible?
- A56: No, they are not. The DAGS does not support recurring operational costs.
- Q57: Given that we have 25 years expertise in the export business we will not be hiring consultants to visit these new markets for the penetration exercise, but will be doing the work ourselves. Are staff salaries an eligible expense given that we will not be hiring a consultant?
- A57: No, an employee's salary expense is ineligible.
- Q58: Is it possible to apply for funds under the Grant Scheme if we are an agriculture business operating in the tourism sector and have separate projects which require funding of amounts under each procedure.
- A58: Yes, applicants that satisfy all the Eligibility Requirements may apply to the Direct Assistance Grant Scheme.
- Q59: Would a farm co-operative still have to find support organisations if it operates as a business and is only subject to the regulations of the Registrar of Co-operatives?
- A59: No, the farm co-operative would not have to find partners if it operates as a business and is only subject to the regulations of the Registrar of Co-operatives.

- Q60: Can my company apply for grant funding if we have an open grant under the last Call in 2018?
- A60: Applicants that have an open Grant contract under the last 2018 Call are not eligible to apply. i.e. applicants who have not submitted their final reimbursement claims to Caribbean Export by June 11, 2019, are not eligible to apply.
- Q61: Do applicants have to complete the Diagnostic Assessment Tool?
- A61: All applicants must complete the online SME Diagnostic Assessment which is assessable by clicking on the following hyper link <https://sme-diagnostics.ceintelligence.com/go?to=DAGS>. **The full Results Page (TOTAL SCORES - OUT)** of the Diagnostic Assessment Tool must be printed and submitted with each copy of the application.
- Q62: If I have already completed a diagnostic assessment, do I need to complete another one for this call?
- A62: No you do not need to complete a second assessment. You can use the results of your existing assessment. If you need to update the old assessment or if you have lost your TAN, please send a written request to dagsinfo@carib-export.com