

**EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
TO OPERATE A WATER ACTIVITY BUSINESS AT**

**Ulster Canal Marina,
Clones, Co. Monaghan**

Reference: EOI 2026 - 01

Introduction

Waterways Ireland is inviting Expressions of Interest from Water Activity businesses to operate their business at the Ulster Canal Marina in Clones. (Please see the Scope of Requirements section below). We are looking to encourage a range of activities to cater for both the local community and visitors to the site. This is an opportunity for dynamic, innovative individuals/businesses to provide destination experiences at what has become an outstanding and popular attraction within County Monaghan.

About Waterways Ireland

Waterways Ireland is a cross-border Body, the largest of six North/South Implementation Bodies created as part of the implementation of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement of 10 April 1998. The Body was formally established by the Agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland establishing Implementation Bodies in Dublin on 8 March 1999. This Agreement was given domestic legal effect by means of the North/South Co-Operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order, 1999 and the British-Irish Agreement Act, 1999. It is the cross-border navigational authority responsible for the management, maintenance, development, and restoration of almost 1,100 km of inland navigable waterways and over 600 km of Greenways and Blueways, principally for recreational purposes.

Waterways Ireland's Headquarters is in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, with regional offices in Dublin, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim, and Scarriff, Co. Clare. The Body employs 350 permanent staff located at sites close to the inland waterways who are assisted by a team of seasonally recruited staff reflecting the seasonality of the Organisation's remit. Waterways Ireland is the navigation authority responsible for the following navigable inland waterways: Lower Bann Navigation; Erne System; Shannon-Erne Waterway; Shannon Navigation; Royal Canal; Grand Canal; Barrow Navigation and Ulster Canal.

At an operational level, Waterways Ireland is responsible for a vast range of infrastructure assets including navigation channels, embankments, towpaths, adjoining lands, harbours, jetties, fishing stands, bridges, culverts, aqueducts, overflows, locks, sluices and lock houses along with buildings and archives. The current valuation of the rebuild costs of this infrastructure is estimated at €1 billion. Waterways Ireland's work programmes are critical to providing a safe and high-quality recreational environment for customers, whilst preserving the industrial and environmental heritage of the waterways for future generations.

Scope of Requirements

- Water activities to include but not limited to: instructor led water activities (canoeing, kayaking, SUP, windsurfing); hydrobikes; equipment hire; boat hire.
- Operating hours and length of operating season to be agreed between Waterways Ireland and the business.
- Safety must be the number one priority in the operation of the business.
- Compulsory requirement for walk-up/online bookings.

Mandatory Requirements (Pass/Fail)

The following must be provided. This ensures only safe, competent operators proceed to scoring:

- Proof of relevant qualifications and competence
- Safety procedures/risk assessments
- Proof of insurance
- Equipment maintenance procedures
- Safeguarding procedures
- Businesses must be able to offer walk-up/online booking for members of the public to avail of activities/hire
- Proof of appropriate staffing and supervision

Evaluation Criteria

Operating Concept	50%
Experience and Track Record	30%
Community / Social / Visitor Benefit	20%

The above criteria will be scored according to the table below. Evaluation will be carried out by a panel and moderated.

Score	Meaning	Interpretation
90 – 100%	Outstanding	A very comprehensive response demonstrating extensive understanding offering full assurance to client – fully supported with no reservations.
80 – 89%	Excellent	An excellent response demonstrating excellent understanding offering assurance to client – strongly supported.
70 – 79%	Very good	A very good response demonstrating very good understanding offering assurance to client – fully supported.
60 – 69%	Good	A good response demonstrating good understanding offering assurance to client – well supported.
50 – 59%	Acceptable	An acceptable response demonstrating a minimum understanding offering assurance to client – satisfactorily supported.
Less than 50%	Unacceptable	

Licence Terms

- Duration (1 year with possible extensions). A 3 Year extension will be dependent on satisfactory performance and meeting all the requirements of the licensee as stated in this document and any subsequent agreements confirmed in writing.
- Licence fee €150 per annum
- The Licensee shall pay all charges for electricity and other services supplied to or used during their occupation of the property and compensate the Licensor in full on demand for any liability for such charges not paid for directly by the Licensee. The Licensee shall be responsible for the payment of all rates, local taxes and other levies due in accordance with the Regulations or any other Statutes, Orders, Regulations or Bye-Laws.
- Compliance with Waterways Ireland operational conditions.
- Waterways Ireland will not offer multiple licences for the same activity/service to operate from the marina.
- Successful applicants will be required to work with Waterways Ireland and other successful applicants in the promotion and operation of the marina.
- A storage container will be provided on-site for equipment storage.
- There is a service block on-site which includes WC and shower facilities.

Submission Instructions

Expressions of interest should be **emailed only** no later than **2.00pm on 13th March 2026** quoting Ref EOI 2026 - 01 to: hannah.callaghan@waterwaysireland.org

The applicant is fully responsible for the safe and timely delivery of the expression of interest. Late expressions of interest will not be considered.

All queries should be directed to hannah.callaghan@waterwaysireland.org Closing date for receipt of queries is **12.00 noon on 6th March 2026**. This date must be adhered to in order provide ample time to respond before the close of the expressions of interest exercise.

Instructions/guidance for completing the submission document

1. Operating Concept

Please provide examples of how your activity business operates. These can include but are not limited to:

- *Core Activity:* What activities you offer and who they are for.
- *Pricing:* The Associated costs of experience per person and/or group activities.
- *Daily Operations:* Opening hours, session times, and how the business runs day to day.
- *Staffing & Management:* Staff roles, qualifications, and how the business is managed.
- *Booking System:* How customers book and pay (online, phone, in person, etc.).
- *Legal & Safety:* Insurance, safety procedures, equipment checks, and risk management.
- *Polices:* Please outline how your proposed activities and operations will support environmental sustainability at the Ulster Canal Marina (e.g., low-impact activities, waste management practices, environmental stewardship).

2. Track Record

Please provide examples to demonstrate your track record in the water activity business. These can include but are not limited to:

- Details of previous or current water activity businesses/projects
- Number of years of trading and locations of operation
- Types of water activities provided (e.g. kayaking, canoeing, paddleboarding, etc)
- Relevant qualifications and certifications
- Examples of client groups (e.g. schools, tourists, families, clubs, corporate groups)
- Examples of programmes, events, or courses delivered
- Awards, memberships, or accreditations (if applicable)
- Supporting documents (e.g. photos, brochures, certificates, reports)
- Safety record and incident management experience
- Customer testimonials, reviews, or references
- Links to your social media accounts

3. Community/Social/Tourism benefit

Please provide examples of how your business currently supports the local community and contributes to tourism or how you plan to from the Ulster Canal Marina. These can include but are not limited to:

- Examples of community engagement work with local schools, youth groups, sports clubs, or community organisations or how you plan to do this from the Ulster Canal Marina.
- Programmes or discounts for local residents, families, or disadvantaged groups
- Health, wellbeing, and inclusion initiatives (e.g. beginners' sessions, adaptive activities).

- Partnerships with local businesses, accommodation providers, or tourism bodies.
- Visitor-focused experiences that promote Clones and the Ulster Canal.
- Marketing or promotional activity featuring the local area.
- Evidence such as photographs, event posters, social media posts, testimonials, press coverage, or website links.
- How you intend to manage the business to provide a consistent quality of service.
- Job creation in the local area.

Disclaimers and GDPR

1. This document(s) has been prepared by Waterways Ireland for the sole purpose of providing information and response procedures to, and generating conformant responses from, businesses bidding for the provision of the goods and services defined in this document.
2. Recipients of this Expressions of Interest document(s) are advised that nothing in this document nor any communication made between Waterways Ireland or its representatives, or any part thereof, shall be taken as constituting a contract, agreement or representation between Waterways Ireland and any other party, nor shall it or they be taken as constituting a contract, agreement or representation that a contract shall be offered or awarded in accordance herewith or at all.
3. Waterways Ireland does not bind itself to accept the most economically advantageous, or any, tender or proposal submitted as a result of this document or any subsequent document issued in connection with this Expressions of Interest, nor to accept alternative proposals made by suppliers, nor to enter into any contract as a result of this Expressions of Interest. Waterways Ireland reserves the right to change any aspect, or cease this Expressions of Interest at any time.
4. Waterways Ireland has taken all reasonable care to ensure that the facts stated herein are true and accurate in all material respects at this point in time. It should, however, be stressed that the information provided is intended only as a preliminary background explanation of Waterways Ireland activities and is not intended to form any contractual relationship with Waterways Ireland.
5. The information contained in the Expressions of Interest document(s) is selective and subject to consent, updating, expansion, revision and amendment. It does not purport to contain all the information that a prospective operator may require.
6. This Expressions of Interest document has been completed in good faith. However, neither Waterways Ireland, its financial or legal advisors, its representatives, officers, agents nor its employees make any representation or warranty, or accepts any responsibility for the information contained in the document(s) or its fairness, accuracy or completeness. Nor shall they be liable for any loss or damage arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communications.
7. Only the express terms of any written contract relating to the subject matter of this Expressions of Interest document(s), as and when it is executed, shall have any contractual effect in connection with the matters to which it relates.
8. No person in the employment of Waterways Ireland has any authority to make or give any representations, warranty and indemnity or undertaking, express or implied, either in respect of the information provided or any related transaction. Representations of information shall be made, where required, through briefing meetings between nominated Waterways Ireland staff and provider staff.

9. Waterways Ireland reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to exclude immediately any provider or third party found to be in breach of any warning, requirement of confidentiality or intellectual property and may take any action in pursuit of remedy for such breach as may be deemed appropriate.
10. Applicants shall make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the information relating to this Expressions of Interest competition. No allowance shall be made in respect of any failure on the part of the applicants to acquaint themselves with the requirements of Waterways Ireland in relation to the Expressions of Interest.
11. At Waterways Ireland, we treat your privacy seriously. Any personal data which you provide to us will be treated with the highest standards of security and confidentiality, in accordance with EU and UK GDPR and Data Protection legislation. Our Privacy Notice sets out details of the information that we collect, how we process it and who we share it with. It also explains your rights under data protection law in relation to our processing of your data. The Privacy Notice is available on our website at <https://www.waterwaysireland.org/privacy-notice>.