

## 'APPLICATIONS GUIDE (Last Updated February 2007) - Filling in the Application Form'

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## How projects are selected for fundings

### Overview

Organisations have to compete to get money from the European Social Fund (ESF). The selection system is an open and transparent process that has been designed to ensure that the best projects which meet the needs of the region within the available ESF budget are chosen. The system is also designed to avoid the duplication and over-provision of any activities.

The selection system consists of several stages:

1. Completing the application form.
2. Selection panels draw up a list of projects recommended for approval.
3. Regional Committees take the final decision on which projects to fund.
4. Government Offices issue contracts to successful applicants.
5. Unsuccessful applicants can appeal against the decision.

These stages are explained in detail below.

## 1 Completing the application form

- You must provide a completed application form for each project that you submit. It is important that you fully answer all the questions as your project will be judged solely on the basis of the evidence that you provide on the application form.
- The interactive application form (IAF) will only display questions which are relevant to the region and Policy Field and Measure that you are applying under.
- Your answers to each question should be no longer than two pages of A4.
- Guidance is available for every question if you click the help buttons on the interactive form. You can print this guidance if you click on the menu button and select the appropriate option.

### Regional guidance

- Each region will produce its own set of guidance which you must refer to.

- **Regional guidance will contain scoring and selection information specific to applications being submitted in your region and it is essential that you read this with the national guidance.**

### **Eligibility questions**

- Eligibility questions will be indicated by an **[E]** on the application form.
- The questions in sections 2 and 3 of the application form are used to determine whether your project is eligible for ESF support.
- If your answer for any of these questions does not match the requirements in the guidance for that question, your project will not be eligible for ESF support.

### **Information questions**

Information questions will be indicated by an **[I]** on the application form.

- Although these questions will not be scored, the information they request is essential and may be used during the selection process.
- When answering all questions you should take account of the needs of the Regional Development Plan (RDP), Single Programming Document (Objectives 1 and 2) and Operational Programme (as a national bid in England).

### **Scoring questions**

Scoring questions will be indicated by an **[S]** on the application form.

- The highest number of marks available for each question is indicated in the table at the end of this section.
- Each scoring question contains a number of points which you should answer fully. You will score marks on the basis of whether you have answered each point fully, partly or not at all.
- **You should refer to the regional guidance issued by your Government Office to find out the highest number of marks available for each point and how each point will be scored.**

### **New equal opportunities gateway questions**

To be eligible for funding, you must answer the equal opportunity gateway questions on the interactive application form to the satisfaction of the region. So you should consult the Government Office's ESF Objective 3 application guidance. When you have completed the gateway questionnaire, and the region have accepted it, your application will be awarded six points which contribute towards your overall score. No other score is possible for successful applications.

### **Sustainable development**

You are encouraged to use the Sustainable Development toolkit (available on [www.esf.gov.uk](http://www.esf.gov.uk)) and look at their region's application guidance on sustainable development. This will enable you to identify what you are already doing to contribute towards sustainable development and what you should be doing in future.

### **Quality threshold**

- A national quality threshold of 65% has been set.

- This means that if your project does not score at least 65% of the highest number of points available for your application, your project can not be selected for support.

## **2 Selection Panels**

- Government Offices will check your application to ensure that it is complete and meets all of the eligibility criteria.
- Eligible applications will then be passed to a selection panel to be scored.
- Selection panels are made up of regional partners who represent sectors such as voluntary organisations, further education colleges and local authorities.
- After your project has been scored, the extent to which it fits with the regional objectives outlined in the regional development plan (RDP) of the area in which you are applying, and the extent to which it represents value for money will be assessed. This information will then be used during the selection process.
- You will be given feedback on your application and will be told the score your project has achieved. This will allow you to identify the strengths and weaknesses of your application.

## **3 Regional committees**

- Each selection panel will draw up a list of projects recommended for approval and this will be passed to a regional committee who will take the final decision on which projects to fund.
- Regional committees are made of Government Office representatives and regional partners.

## **4 Issuing contracts to successful applicants**

- If your project has been selected for funding, your Government Office will send you a contract.

## **5 Unsuccessful applicants**

- If your project is not selected for funding, the GO will write to let you know, enclosing the marks awarded by the selection panel. This might help you identify the strengths and weaknesses of your proposal for consideration when making future applications.
  - The letter will also explain the appeals procedures. There are only two grounds for appeal, that the selection panel or regional committee:
    - demonstrated bias against your project proposal; or
    - made a decision no reasonable person would make.
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## Selection questions - Questionnaire 1

Question	The highest number of marks available	How marks will be awarded
<p><b>2.2 Equal Opportunities Gateway</b></p> <p><b>Questionnaire 1</b></p> <p>Q1 Does your project understand the wide range of needs you have to deal with when helping your beneficiaries?</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>You must explain any previous experience you have of working with the types of beneficiary you aim to help. If you have not had experience of working with target groups, you must specify who you have consulted to find out about the target groups' needs and when you sought this advice.</p> <p>Based on your previous experience or consultation, what are the different needs you expect to have to meet within the target groups you have specified in your application.</p>
<p>Q2 Will the way you design and deliver your project meet the different needs which you have identified in the previous question?</p>		<p>You must explain how the design and delivery of your project take into account the needs, issues and problems you have identified through past experience or consultation.</p> <p>Your supportive information will need to consider any needs and issues you identified under question 1. You must explain any previous experience you have of working with the target groups you have specified.</p>
<p>Q3 Do you have an equal opportunities policy that applies to the project, staff and beneficiaries and a plan to put the policy into place?</p>		<p>Give details of how the policy applied to the project - including staff and beneficiaries.</p> <p>Back up your policy with a separate plan for putting it into place which sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the key objectives;</li> <li>• the baseline and targets;</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how you will gather data;</li> <li>• monitoring review meetings you have planned; and</li> <li>• the internal systems you have developed, including the resources available to support the policy.</li> </ul> <p>Include time, staff and equal opportunities training and development planned for staff.</p> <p>Explain how your project management will deal with any complaints of discrimination, bullying or harassment that may be made by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employers and employees;</li> <li>• clients;</li> <li>• beneficiaries; or</li> <li>• the general public.</li> </ul> <p>Explain how you will monitor, review and update the plan during the life of the project.</p> <p>Confirm that your project will meet its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Amendment Act, the Sex Discrimination Acts and any other relevant legislation.</p>
<p>Q4 Will you use appropriate marketing and publicity to reflect the project's commitment to equal opportunities?</p>		<p>Describe the different types of marketing and publicity materials you will use.</p> <p>Explain how equal opportunities will feature in these materials.</p>

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## Selection questions - Questionnaire 2

Question	The highest number of marks available	How marks will be awarded
<p><b>Questionnaire 2</b></p> <p>Q1 Is your proposed project 'equality-aware'?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain how you have considered equality issues in terms of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ aims; and</li> <li>○ how you will deliver the proposed project.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Explain how you will build equality issues into follow-up action or recommendations which may be made.</li> </ul>
<p>Q2 Do you have an equal opportunities policy that applies to the project and a plan to put the policy into place?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give details of how the policy and plan apply to the proposed project. Where appropriate, you should explain how you will make sure that companies and other stakeholder organisations are committed to equal opportunities.</li> <li>• Back up your policy with a separate plan for putting it into place which sets out:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the key objectives;</li> <li>○ the baselines and targets;</li> <li>○ how you will gather data;</li> <li>○ monitoring review meetings you have planned; and</li> <li>○ the internal systems you have developed, including the resources available to support the policy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Include time, staff and equal opportunities training and development planned for all staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain how your project</li> </ul>

		<p>management will deal with any complaints of discrimination, bullying or harassment made by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ employers and employees;</li> <li>○ clients;</li> <li>○ beneficiaries; or</li> <li>○ the general public.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain how you will monitor, review and update the plan during the life of the project.</li> <li>• Confirm your project is committed to meeting its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Amendment Act, the Sex Discrimination Acts and any other relevant legislation.</li> </ul>
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### Selection questions - Questionnaire 3

Question	The highest number of marks available	How marks will be awarded
<p><b>Questionnaire 3</b></p> <p>Q1 Does your project have an equal opportunities policy that applies to the project and a plan to put the policy into place?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give details of how the policy and plan apply to the proposed project. Where appropriate, you should explain how you will make sure that companies and other stakeholder organisations have equal opportunities policies and plans to put them into place which relate to the beneficiaries and the project.</li> <li>• Back up your policy with a separate plan for putting it into place which sets out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the key objectives;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the baselines and targets;</li> <li>○ how you will gather data;</li> <li>○ monitoring review meetings you have planned; and</li> <li>○ the internal systems you have developed, including the resources available to support the policy.</li> </ul> <p>Include time, staff and equal opportunities training and development for all staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain how your project management will deal with any complaints of discrimination, bullying or harassment made by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ employers and employees;</li> <li>○ clients;</li> <li>○ beneficiaries; or</li> <li>○ the general public.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Explain how you will monitor, review and update the plan during the life of the project.</li> <li>• Confirm your project is committed to meeting its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Amendment Act, the Sex Discrimination Acts and any other relevant legislation.</li> </ul>
<p>Q2 Does your project understand the wide range of needs it will have to deal with when helping groups of company employees (and non-employed individuals where relevant)?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You must state the main characteristics of employees or individuals you are aiming to help.</li> <li>• You must explain any previous experience you have of working with the groups specified.</li> <li>• If you have not had experience of working with the groups specified, you must explain who you have consulted to find out</li> </ul>

		<p>about the groups' needs and when you sought this advice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on your previous experience or consultation, what are the different needs you expect to meet within the workforce or individuals you have specified in your application?</li> </ul>
<p>Q3 Will the way you design and deliver your project meet the different needs which you have identified in the previous question?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You must explain how the way you design and deliver your project will meet the needs, issues and problems you have identified through past experience or consultation.</li> <li>• Your supportive information will need to consider needs and issues identified under question 2. You must explain any previous experience of working with the target groups specified.</li> </ul>
<p>Q4 Will you use appropriate marketing and publicity to reflect the project's commitment to equal opportunities?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the different types of marketing and publicity and training materials you will use.</li> <li>• Explain how equal opportunities will feature in these materials.</li> </ul>

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## Selection questions - Questionnaire 4

Question	The highest number of marks available	How marks will be awarded
<p><b>4.1</b></p> <p>Explain the purpose of the project and what it is going to do.</p>	None	<p><b>I</b> Information question</p> <p>Although this question will not be scored it is being asked to assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for Objective 3, how the project fits with the Regional Development Plan (RDP) and for National Projects with the Operational Programme (OP); or</li> <li>• for Objective 1 and Objective 2, how the project fits with the Single Programming Document (SPD).</li> </ul> <p>The information you give will help us take an overview of the project and will affect selection.</p>
<p><b>4.2</b></p> <p>Explain why the project is needed.</p>	33	<p><b>S</b> Scoring question</p> <p>Your answer should fully take into account the three points listed below. You will be scored against these points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You should provide local detailed evidence and, if appropriate, evidence from a particular sector to support your proposed activity. This can include labour market evidence, local surveys and consultation with employers.</li> <li>• You should describe the barriers faced by the target groups and how your project will help to overcome these barriers.</li> <li>• You should show your project links with or complements</li> </ul>

		government strategies or initiatives.
<p><b>4.3</b></p> <p>Who is the project for?</p>	20	<p><b>S Scoring question</b></p> <p>Your answer should fully take into account the four points listed below. You will be scored against these points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which of the priority target groups or areas identified in the Regional Development Plan or Single Programming Document (Operational Programme, if applying as a National bid in England) does your project aim to help?</li> <li>• If your target group or area is different from those identified in the Regional Development Plan or Single Programme Document (Operational Programme, if applying as a national bid in England) explain why.</li> <li>• Show that the number of people your project will help is achievable.</li> <li>• If your project aims to target people for development, how will you recruit them? Show that this recruitment process is appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.4</b></p> <p>Describe how you will design, carry out and manage your project to meet the needs of your target group.</p>	18	<p><b>S Scoring question</b></p> <p>Your answer should fully take into account the six points listed below. You will be scored against these points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the main processes and stages in carrying out the project.</li> <li>• How will you measure and monitor the needs of your target</li> </ul>

		<p>group?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe any relevant experience your organisation has had in running previous projects.</li> <li>• Describe any research you have carried out.</li> <li>• How will you publicise your project during its life and when you have finished it.</li> <li>• How will you keep the project going after ESF support finishes?</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.5</b></p> <p>What will the results of the project be?</p>	15	<p><b>S</b> Scoring question</p> <p>Your answer should fully take account of the three points listed below. You will be scored against these points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the project lead to any of the following?</li> <li>• People achieving relevant NVQ levels 1 to 5 (or equivalent or units towards these). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ People getting other relevant qualifications.</li> <li>○ Increased levels of business and employment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How do the results relate to the Regional Development Plan (Objective 3) or Single Programming Document (Objectives 1 and 2 only) or Operational Programme (as a national bid in England)?</li> <li>• How will you make sure that the project gets these results?</li> </ul>
<b>4.6</b>	2	<b>S</b> Scoring question

<p>How will your project support regional approaches to sustainable development (development that can be maintained)?</p>		<p>You should refer to the Regional Development Plan (regional Objective 3 projects) for further information or the SPD (Objective 1 or 2) or the OP (national Objective 3 projects). To answer this question you should refer to one or more of the following four aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protecting the environment;</li> <li>• careful use of natural resources;</li> <li>• progress which recognises the needs of everyone; and</li> <li>• maintaining high and steady levels of economic growth and employment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.7</b></p> <p>How will you involve the information society and information communication technologies (ICTs) when you carry out your project?</p>	<p>3</p>	<p><b>S</b> Scoring question</p> <p>You should refer to the Regional Development Plan (regional Objective 3 projects) for further information or the SPD (Objective 1 or 2) or the OP (national Objective 3 projects). All projects should explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what ICT you will use;</li> <li>• how you will use ICT; and</li> <li>• what the expected benefits and results of using the proposed ICT will be.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.8</b></p> <p>How will your project fit in with local initiatives?</p>	<p>3</p>	<p><b>S</b> Scoring question</p> <p>You should refer to the Regional Development Plan (regional Objective 3 projects) for further information or the SPD (Objective 1 or 2) or the OP (national Objective 3 projects). All projects should describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how far you will involve any local partnerships in running or</li> </ul>

		<p>developing the project;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how you will maintain these links;</li> <li>• how flexible the project will be in responding to local needs; and</li> <li>• any links to local strategies or initiatives.</li> </ul>
<b>4.9</b>	50	<b>S</b> Scoring question
<b>Objective 1 only</b>		<b>If you are applying under Objective 1, the application form will have an additional question for you to complete. Please refer to your regional guidance for details.</b>

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### Checklist before sending your application form

- Have you completed the interactive application form?
  - Have you printed two copies of the application form?
  - Have you sent Public Match Funding Certificates (PMFC) for all public match funders to fill in? (When returned make sure that the certificates are stamped and signed by an authorised signatory.)
  - If you are providing your own match funding, have you arranged for a PMFC to be completed, stamped and signed by an authorised signatory?
  - Have you confirmed that one match funder (usually the funder providing the most match funding) has completed Part 4 of the PMFC to confirm that they will take on monitoring responsibilities?
  - Have you completed the promoter's declaration (if this applies)? This must be stamped with the organisation stamp and signed by an authorised signatory.
  - Have you sent two printed copies of the application, an interactive copy on disk, PMFCs and a promoter's declaration (if this applies) to the ESF Division or Government Office?
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