



Department for
Communities and
Local Government



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

2014 to 2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme

Call for Proposals European Regional Development Fund

Priority Axis 1: Promoting Research and Innovation

Managing Authority:	Department for Communities and Local Government
European Structural and Investment Fund:	European Regional Development Fund
Priority Axis:	Priority Axis 1: Promoting Research and Innovation
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1. Call Context

The 2014 to 2020 European Structural and Investment Funds bring the European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund and part of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development together into a single European Union Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme for England supporting the key growth priorities of innovation, research and development, support for small and medium sized enterprises, low carbon, skills, employment, and social inclusion.

The Funds are managed by the Department for Communities and Local Government for European Regional Development Fund, Department for Work and Pensions for European Social Fund and the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs for European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. In London, the Greater London Authority acts as an Intermediate Body for the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund programmes. Unless stated otherwise, the term “Managing Authority” will apply to all these organisations. The Managing Authorities work closely with local partners who provide;

- Practical advice and information to the Managing Authorities to assist in the preparation of local plans that contribute towards Operational Programme priorities and targets;
- Local intelligence to the Managing Authorities in the development of project calls (decided by the Managing Authorities) that reflect Operational Programme and local development needs as well as match funding opportunities; and,
- Advice on local economic growth conditions and opportunities within the context of Operational Programmes and the local European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy to aid the Managing Authorities’ assessments at outline and full application stage.

This call is issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government and invites outline applications in respect of the European Regional Development Fund. The European Regional Development Fund is specifically focussed on investment to support economic growth and job creation. The call invites proposals in respect of Priority Axis 1 of the European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme: “Promoting Research and Innovation” against the requirements set out in this call document.

1.1. National Context

The European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme in England recognises that there are needs and challenges common to all parts of the country. In particular, [‘Smart Specialisation in England’](#) recognises that geographies and patterns of innovation are complex and variable and that more needs to be done to

ensure that firms and research institutions are not hindered by artificial or administrative geographies.

The types of actions needed to address England's challenges in terms of converting excellent research into innovation and economic outcomes are the same across the country, regardless of the category of region. The objective of improving how small and medium sized enterprises commercialise research and how they collaborate with research institutions will be taken forward through activities such as knowledge exchange, business engagement, networking and investment support in all parts of England, with the choice of sectors and technologies reflecting the approach of smart specialisation.

The private sector plays a strong role in investing in research and development and accounts for the overwhelming majority of total innovation spend in the United Kingdom (UK). Despite this, small and medium sized enterprises are not participating proportionately - according to the [Innovation Survey](#), only 21.6 per cent of enterprises (with more than 10 employees) were engaged in either product or process innovation. This ranged from 20.5 per cent in smaller firms with between 10 and 49 employees and 29.8 per cent in larger firms (with between 100 and 249 employees). So barriers exist for small and medium sized enterprises in their capacity and propensity to innovate and invest in internal capacity.

Particular barriers include a lack of awareness of the benefits of investing in innovation, its cost and uncertainty about the value that will accrue to the company. These development needs are compounded by a lack of access to appropriate finance, with nearly half of innovation-active small and medium sized enterprises experiencing difficulties obtaining finance. Under Priority Axis 1, activity will seek to strengthen research and technological development and innovation by a range of capital and revenue focused interventions.

The Operational Programme identifies two Investment Priorities which will strengthen research, technological development and innovation:

- Investment Priority 1a – Enhancing research and innovation infrastructure and capacities to develop research and innovation excellence, and promoting centres of competence, in particular, those of European interest; and,
- Investment Priority 1b - Promoting business investment in research and innovation; developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation; and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advance manufacturing

capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies.

Investment Priority 1a - Enhancing research and innovation infrastructure and capacities to develop research and innovation excellence, and promoting centres of competence, in particular, those of European interest.

Specific Objective: Increase investment in research and innovation infrastructure that catalyses collaboration with the research community especially in sectors identified through smart specialisation.

The purpose of support under this Investment Priority will be to build or enhance infrastructure that in due course will contribute to the greater commercialisation of products, services and processes. This requires that the infrastructure is used directly by enterprises (on an open access basis) or that there is effective cooperation between researchers and the private sector. Enhanced infrastructure and capacities will also underpin activity under the other Investment Priority selected within this Priority Axis.

Investment Priority 1b – Promoting business investment in research and innovation; developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation; and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies.

Specific Objective: Increase investment in research and innovation by small and medium sized enterprises, particularly in sectors and technologies identified through smart specialisation.

Specific Objective: Increase the number of small and medium sized enterprises engaged in knowledge exchange, collaborative and contract research and innovation with research institutions, public institutions or large enterprises in order to help them bring new products and processes to market.

The focus of activity under this priority axis is improving commercialisation of new or enhanced products or services by small and medium sized enterprises, whether through increased investment or better collaborations, but this requires the involvement of a much wider group including larger firms in cooperation with their supply chains and other small and medium sized enterprises, higher education institutions, public sector institutions and research centres, Catapult Centres and other centres of excellence.

1.2 Local Development Need

This call will focus on Investment Priorities 1a and 1b. Where the expectation is that the outcome of this call will result in the award of a single contract, applicants may wish to bid individually, as part of a consortium or a partnership (in line with European Regional Development Fund Eligibility Rules Guidance). Bids which deviate from this will be received, but should provide an explanation for this approach. See below for further details

The North East Local Enterprise Partnership European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy sets out local innovation priorities to address the combination of challenges and opportunities emerging from the Independent Economic Review led by Lord Adonis in 2013. It seeks to help achieve the step change required in innovation and commercialisation highlighted in the report through the integrated approach described in the European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy (<http://nelep.co.uk/>), in order to improve innovation performance in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area.

Analysis of the reasons behind the lagging innovation and research performance in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area demonstrates the particular strengths, opportunities and weaknesses faced by partners. The analysis was summarised in a paper prepared by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership which has been widely consulted upon by partners and which is available through the following link: <http://nelep.co.uk/>

The North East Local Enterprise Partnership has identified a number of priority areas for intervention which together provide for the integrated approach identified as critical in the research highlighted above. The European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy will provide a framework through which the deployment of European Structural and Investment Funds resources will support the integrated approach, acting as a driver to exploit opportunities associated with smart specialisation by strengthening the area's innovation eco-system.

Under Priority Axis 1 of the European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme these objectives will be achieved by strengthening research, technological development and innovation through:

- promoting business investment in research and innovation;
- developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector. In particular, promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation; and,
- support for technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first

production, in particular, in key enabling technologies and the diffusion of general purpose technologies.

Local priorities mean support in the following areas of activity is envisaged:

- the creation of hubs and networks which facilitate interaction between enterprises and research;
- actions that match capabilities in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area business base and research organisations with business and social needs to create the possibilities for new business models and investment. In particular, but not exclusively, in 'smart specialisation' areas such as passenger vehicle manufacturing, sub-sea and offshore technology, life sciences, healthcare, creative digital and software;
- actions that build on strengths and capabilities in local businesses, social organisations and academic institutions, supporting the creation of new and / or innovative products and services;
- actions that strengthen co-ordination within the innovation and research ecosystem to promote open innovation to solve business and social challenges both within the North East Local Enterprise Partnership territory and beyond;
- applications will need to avoid duplication of provision and there is a need for co-ordination across the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area in interventions linked to the cross-network and research commercialisation activities.

The local European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy reflects the needs of the local economy specific to particular parts of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area. For European Structural and Investment Funds purposes the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area includes two categories of region:

- More Developed – Tyne and Wear, Northumberland
- Transition - Durham

As part of its status as a 'transition region' Durham has a ring fenced notional allocation of European Regional Development Fund funding. Proposals responding to this call that will deliver across both categories of region will be required to address the specific needs and issues relating to Durham.

1.3 Scope of Activity

Applicants will need to demonstrate that proposed projects do not duplicate existing national provisions, demonstrating in particular how operations will complement and align with smart specialisation, e.g. limited set of evidenced-based priorities,

collaboration, links with national policies for innovation, to deliver additional outcomes.

This call responds to the needs as defined on the European Regional Development Fund England Operational Programme under **Priority Axis 1 Investment Priorities 1 (a) and 1 (b)**. The call also responds to the local development need set out in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area's European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy.

1.3.1 Investment Priority 1a - Enhancing research and innovation, investment infrastructure and capacities to develop Research & Innovation excellence, and promoting centres of competence, in particular, those of European interest.

Specific Objective: Increase investment in research and innovation infrastructure that catalyses collaboration with the research community, especially in sectors identified through smart specialisation.

Indicative actions to be supported by the European Regional Development Fund may include:

- Specialist infrastructure/facilities/centres linked to smart specialisation including enhancements to science parks and to improve access to these facilities through digital and physical links;
- Investment in the development and upgrading of innovation space, with capability to serve as a platform or host for innovation and innovative relationships;
- Improved incubation space to enable research and development and innovation;
- Shared use research laboratories and facilities, particularly targeted at the Great Eight technologies as set out in "Smart Specialisation in England" Development of enterprise, innovation and technology hubs and centres of excellence, in line with the approach set out in "Smart Specialisation in England";
- Development and upgrading of appropriate test facilities and deployment infrastructure.

In all cases, actions may include provision of appropriate equipment and staff resources.

Local Context:

Enhancing research and innovation infrastructure and capacity, support for physical innovation projects.

The development, scale up and exploitation of innovative solutions, assets and infrastructure, through improved incubation space, test facilities to enable the

commercialisation of research and development and innovation hubs will facilitate the acceleration and delivery of innovation in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area.

This priority is closely aligned with the North East European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy which identifies a number of smart specialisation areas where the territory has innovation potential. A particular emphasis will be placed on actions which support innovation and technology hubs and centres of excellence, manufacturing clusters and the development of appropriate test facilities, pilot lines and advanced manufacturing capabilities which can support innovation projects move from ideas to commercial exploitation.

Actions that address the on-going deficit in the physical infrastructure available in the region are a key priority. In recent years, the national innovation system has identified and built capacity in the translational gap through a series of funding mechanisms. However, there remains a requirement to further enhance the capabilities in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area, with a particular focus on those that can support innovation delivery. European Regional Development Fund investment under this part of the call will be prioritised upon activities that focus support on:

- Key hubs and networks which enable strengthened interactions between enterprises and research and match capabilities in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area business base and research organisations to business and social needs to create opportunities for new business models and investment, in particular but not exclusively in ‘smart specialisation’ areas;
- Facilitating the development of existing North East Local Enterprise Partnership area strengths and capabilities in local businesses, social organisations and academic institutions, supporting the creation of products and services
- Strengthening the co-ordination within the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area eco-system to promote open innovation to solve business and social challenges

1.3.2 Investment Priority 1b – *Promoting business investment in research and innovation, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation, and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies.*

Specific objective: Increase investment in research and innovation by small and medium sized enterprises, particularly in sectors and technologies identified through smart specialisation.

Specific Objective: Increase the number of small and medium sized enterprises engaged in knowledge exchange, collaborative and contract research and innovation with research institutions, public institutions or large enterprises in order to help them bring new products and processes to market.

Indicative actions to be supported by the European Regional Development Fund may include:

- Support for smart specialisation collaborative and contract research and development including initiatives stimulating and facilitating productive innovation partnerships;
- Support for the commercialisation of new products and business processes and initiatives, particularly targeted to aid innovation in the Great Eight technologies as set out in [Smart Specialisation in England](#);
- Collaborative and contract research and development programmes;
- Innovation vouchers for small and medium sized enterprises ;
- Innovation support programmes for product design and development and systems integration;
- Initiatives simulating the demand for new or improved services, processes and products including business-led and public procurement programmes;
- Schemes providing practical, financial and material support for the innovation process within businesses;
- Schemes stimulating and enabling graduate start-up and spin out from universities, colleges and research institutions;
- Technology support programmes and demonstrator projects and programmes for current and future technologies;
- Knowledge transfer programmes, particularly linked to priority growth sectors and the technologies set out in [Smart Specialisation in England](#);
- Support to engage more businesses in knowledge transfer and innovation, develop links to wider Higher Education Institutions and research institutions and demonstrate the benefits of working with knowledge base partners;
- Support for innovation ecosystems including business-led networks and open innovation ecosystems that reduce the complexity of interaction within and between organisations; and,
- Activities promoting a smart specialisation approach and initiatives that develop the supportive environment for innovation in small and medium sized

enterprises including the promotion of networks and industry groups in key sectors.

Local Context:

In taking forward the areas of activity identified within the Operational Programme the following local innovation priorities for the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area have been identified in the European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy.

- **Cross-network development**

For the North East, a key priority is action to improve networking across the existing North East innovation eco-system, in order to improve opportunities for innovation-led business growth and to reduce the likelihood that such opportunities are missed as a result of imperfect information flows.

Research has identified significant co-ordination failures creating barriers to business innovation and translation of knowledge. The call will prioritise applications which support the development of cross-network innovation initiatives or super-networks.

Activity under this call should underpin the North East innovation eco-system by directly addressing failures of communication and information flows between and across networks, businesses and research bodies. It should also seek to ensure that opportunities for innovation engagement, business development, research commercialisation, skills and inward innovation investment are not missed and that investment complements national government investments such as 'Venturefest' North East.

Activity should be inclusive and include or promote North East, 'smart specialisation' networks, providing engagement opportunities and support for existing networks and their members, for businesses in the region not currently engaged in innovation networks and for potential end-users seeking opportunities to access capability in the North East to solve development problems through new business models and platforms.

In addition, it should provide a platform to support the creation of new networks and to help emerging networks to grow. A key requirement will be for further collaborative activities to take place, between different sectors and particularly across smart specialisation areas, therefore proposals, will need to address the issue of alignment and joint working with all relevant partners.

- **University Research commercialisation**

Universities in the North East are home to world class research and large numbers of research students; however, opportunities to translate this research into business growth or product development are not fully exploited. This represents a wasted opportunity and capacity in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area.

A key priority therefore will be to support the commercialisation of research originating from the universities located in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area with a clear potential to contribute to economic development.

In particular the focus will be on capturing the commercialisation potential of doctoral level research, on support for research in response to industry demand, in smart specialisation areas through collaboration between local HEIs and businesses, and on support to develop student business ideas resulting in the development of spin out businesses.

2. Call Requirements

Partners are reminded that the application process is competitive. For this specific call, applications will be assessed after the close of the single deadline set of 27th May 2015. In submitting applications potential applicants should note the following:

- The indicative total budget for this first call is £17 million, of which c60% will be available for projects working across Tyne and Wear and Northumberland (more developed North East Local Enterprise Partnership area) and c40% will be available for activities working across Durham (transition North East Local Enterprise Partnership area). This is intended as a guide and may be reviewed;
- All applications are competitive. Proposals can only contain activities which are eligible for European Regional Development Fund;
- Proposals should be for a minimum of £500,000 European Regional Development Fund;
- Operations may cover the whole or part of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area;
- Applicants will need to have eligible match funding for the balance of costs which must be from a source other than the European Union;
- All procurement must demonstrate compliance with European Union regulations;
- Applicants must demonstrate compliance with State Aid law; and,
- All expenditure and activities will be subject to rigorous audit and non-compliance may lead to financial penalty.

The European Regional Development Fund cannot be used to duplicate existing activities or activities that do not address market failure. European Regional Development Fund can only be used to achieve additional activity or bring forward activity more quickly. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that what they are

proposing is additional to what would have occurred anyway or enables activity to be brought forward and delivered quicker than otherwise would be the case.

The proposed project must not duplicate or undermine existing business support services operating nationally or locally.

For projects including premises, applicants will be required to demonstrate that there is demand that is not met by existing supply. There are further additional requirements for business incubators set out in the European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme ‘Guiding Principles’ section for Priority Axis 1.

3. Required Deliverables

Operations will be expected to achieve the following Programme Deliverables, the definitions of which can be accessed at the [European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme](#).

ID	Indicator
C1	Number of enterprises receiving support
C2	Number of enterprises receiving grants
C4	Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support
C5	Number of new enterprises supported
C6	Private investment matching public support to enterprises (grants)
C26	Number of enterprises cooperating with research entities
C28	Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the market products
C29	Number of enterprises supported to introduce new to the firm products
P1	Number of researchers working in improved research or innovation facilities
P2	Public or commercial buildings built or renovated

Applicants will need to be able to demonstrate how they will achieve the deliverables committed to within their proposal along with any methodology used to record it. Applicants will also need to ensure robust systems are in place, and be able to describe them, to capture and record the targets and to report qualitative and quantitative performance across the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area. All operations will be required to collect data and report progress against the

deliverables with each claim. Where an operation underperforms against their deliverables, they may be subject to a performance penalty.

There must be a fully evidenced audit trail for all contracted deliverables.

4. General Information

Essential information to support the drafting of an application and delivery of a successful European Regional Development Fund funded project is available at the [European Growth Funding](#) website pages.

4.1 Compliance and Eligibility

When developing an application, Applicants should refer to [guidance](#) on eligible Applicants, activities and costs. These are for guidance only and Applicants should take their own specialist advice if in doubt. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the rules and guidance are adhered to both at application stage and following approval.

European Structural and Investment Funds are governed by European regulations and national rules. Applicants are advised to familiarise themselves with the relevant documentation listed in the 'key documents' section prior to submitting an outline application. If successful, Applicants will enter into the standard Funding Agreement and must abide by the standard terms and conditions contained therein. Applicants are therefore strongly advised to read these terms and conditions to ensure that they would be able to enter into such an agreement prior to responding to the call. Once a Funding Agreement has been issued it should be signed and returned within a short timescale.

4.2 Intervention Rate & Match Funding

European Regional Development Fund is the funding which is used where no other funding can be obtained (the funder of last resort). The maximum European Regional Development Fund intervention rate for the operation is 50% in more developed regions and 60% in transition regions. This means European Regional Development Fund can contribute up to 50% of the total eligible project costs in more developed regions and up to 60% of the total eligible cost in transition regions, subject to State Aid regulations. The remaining proportion of funding must come from other eligible sources.

European Regional Development Fund is not paid in advance and expenditure must be defrayed prior to the submission of any claims. Applicants may be asked to demonstrate how they are able to cash flow the operation.

4.3 Applicants

Applicants must be legally constituted at the point of signing a Funding Agreement, and be able to enter into a legally binding Funding Agreement. The Applicant will be the organisation that, if the application is successful, enters into a contract for

European Regional Development Fund and therefore carries the liability for ensuring that the terms of the European Regional Development Fund Funding Agreement are met by them and to all delivery partners. If there is more than one organisation applying for the funds, a lead organisation must be selected to become the Applicant. It is this organisation that carries the responsibility and liability for carrying out a compliant project.

The Managing Authority will consider the Applicant's track record, both positive and negative. If the Applicant has been involved in the delivery of previous European grants and any irregularities with this (these) grant(s) have been identified, the Managing Authority will look into these and expect to see how and what steps have been taken to ensure that these have been addressed to mitigate the risk of further irregularities in the future. It is acknowledged that some organisations will be new to European Structural and Investment Funds and will not have a track record.

4.4 Cross Cutting Themes/Horizontal Principles

All applications received under this call should demonstrate how the Cross Cutting Themes have been addressed in the project design and development. Cross cutting themes for European Regional Development Fund are 'equality and anti-discrimination' and 'sustainable development'. Further information is available in the European Regional Development Fund [Operational Programme](#).

4.5 State Aid & Revenue Generation

Applicants are required, in the Outline Application, to provide a view on how their proposal complies with State Aid law. Applicants must ensure that projects comply with the law on State Aid.¹ Grant funding to any economic undertaking which is state aid can only be awarded if it is compatible aid, in that it complies with the terms of a notified scheme or is covered by the De Minimis Regulation. Guidance for grant recipients, explaining more about State Aid, is available; it is important that Applicants take responsibility for understanding the importance of the State Aid rules and securing their full compliance with them throughout the project, if it is selected into the Programme.

The Managing Authority is not able to give legal advice on State Aid. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the operation is State Aid compliant.

Where the Applicant does not perceive that there is any State Aid, it should state whether or not it considers Articles 61 and 65(8) of Regulation 1303/2013 to apply. This revenue should be taken into account in calculating eligible expenditure. Article

¹ Article 107(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides that: "Save as otherwise provided in the Treaties, any aid granted by a Member State or through state resources in any form whatsoever which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favouring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods shall, in so far as it affects trade between Member States, be incompatible with the internal market."

61 refers to monitoring revenues generated after completion of the project, and Article 65(8) how to deal with differences in the forecast and actual revenues at the end of the operation. The details of this will be tested at the full application stage.

4.6 Funding Agreement

The Funding Agreement is a standard, non-negotiable and legally binding document. Any successful Applicant will be subject to the terms and conditions contained within this agreement. Applicants are strongly advised to seek their own advice to ensure that they would be able to enter into and abide by the terms of the Funding Agreement.

Failure to meet any of the conditions of the agreement or the commitments within the application will result in claw back of funding.

Applicants should be aware that additional provisions and securities may be included within the Funding Agreement to protect the investment. These will be further discussed if relevant following the Full Application stage.

4.7 Procurement

All costs delivered by the Grant Recipient (the Applicant) and/or delivery partners must be delivered on an actual cost basis. Other costs must be procured in line with EU regulations. The most common error identified during audit has been failure to comply with relevant procurement regulations and crucially to maintain a full audit trail to prove that they have complied with the relevant regulation. Robust and transparent procurement is required to ensure that Grant Recipients:

- Consider value for money;
- Maximise efficient use of public money; and,
- Maintain competitiveness and fairness across the European Union.

It is recommended that Applicants seek their own legal advice pertaining to their procurement and requirements to publicise any tendering opportunities.

The Managing Authority is not able to give legal advice on procurement. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure the project is compliant in this respect.

5. Application Process & Prioritisation Methodology

There are two stages to the European Regional Development Fund application process; Outline Application and if successful, Full Application. Applicants must fully complete the Outline Application via LOGASnet (section 9 refers). Guidance is available on the [European Growth Funding](#) website pages. Applications will be subject to a Gateway Assessment undertaken by the Managing Authority under the following criteria:

- Applicant eligibility;
- Activity and expenditure eligibility; and
- The fit with the European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme and the call.

Proposals that pass the Gateway Assessment will move into the Core Assessment which consists of the following:

- Strategic fit;
- Value for money;
- Management & control;
- Deliverability;
- Procurement / tendering; and
- State Aid compliance.

The Managing Authority will seek advice from partners when considering applications to ensure its assessment is informed by local economic growth conditions and opportunities within the context of Operational Programmes and the local European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy. This will include the relevant Local Enterprise Partnership Area European Structural and Investment Funds Committee and other partners deemed relevant to the application.

The assessment and any prioritisation will be undertaken using only the information supplied as part of the application process. The Managing Authority cannot accept further detail outside this process.

Non-public sector Applicants who are successful at the Outline Application stage may be subject to due financial diligence checks by the Managing Authority, prior to submission of a Full Application. Applicants will be required to submit accounts, and to clarify financial or other organisational information. New Applicant organisations may be required to provide details of a guarantor.

6. Support

Please note that this is a competitive call and to preserve impartiality we are unable to enter into correspondence with applicants over their Outline Application. Details of where guidance can be found are contained throughout this calls document. In exceptional circumstances, if there are issues with accessing this guidance, please contact: NE.ERDFenquiries@communities.gsi.gov.uk

7. Key Documents

- Outline Application Form;
- Outline Application Form Guidance;
- Local Enterprise Partnership area's European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy;
- Eligibility Guidance; and
- Target Definitions.

8. Document Checklist

Failure to provide the following documentation will result in the application being rejected

Outline Stage:

- Fully completed Outline Application;
- Financial Tables;
- Outputs, Results and Indicators Tables; and
- Three years financial accounts (if private or voluntary and community sector).

9. Document Submission

Completed Outline Applications must be submitted via the [LOGASnet system](#).

Please note that Applicants will require a user ID and password in order to access the LOGASnet system. Details on how to register on the system can be found on the GOV.UK website [European Growth Funding](#) website pages.

Please allow up to 10 days to receive your login details.

10. Timescales

Launch of Call advertised on gov.uk.	27 th March 2015
Deadline for submission of Outline Application	27 th May 2015

Outline Application forms not received by the deadline will not be assessed. Outline Applications which are not fully completed will be excluded.

For this call applications will normally be required to **commence delivery/activity within three months** of the award of contract.

Any changes related to the deadline for the submission of the Outline Application form will be notified on the [European Growth Funding](#) website pages.

11. Formal Agreement of the European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme

The information and references in the call are based on the latest version of the European Regional Development Fund [Operational Programme](#) and are correct at the time of publishing. The Operational Programme may be subject to further amendment during its final negotiations with the European Commission, and subsequent calls will reflect any changes, to the extent that they may affect the terms of calls, that are made. In relation to the present call, the Managing Authority will take the possibility of relevant changes to the Programme into account when assessing outline and full applications, and where such changes occur will notify Applicants of any issues that arise, and propose a method of dealing with them.