

PROGRESS

Support to national activities aiming at the identification of good practices in combating discrimination and promoting equality

UK STATEMENT OF PRIORITIES & CHALLENGES 2012/13

Introduction: PROGRESS

1. The European Commission has invited proposals from Member States for funding for national awareness-raising activities in support of the Community's anti-discrimination agenda. National Authorities, which in the UK is the Government Equalities Office, can nominate public and private non-profit making organisations, for example, an NGO, trade association or an equality body, to carry out such activities on its behalf.

The European Commission's call for proposals, the application form and its annexes can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/grants/restricted_call_for_proposals_progress_antidiscrimination_diversity_action_grants_2012_en.htm

2. Funding is being provided under PROGRESS (the Community **program**me for **employment** and **social solidarity**). The aim is to support financially the implementation of the objectives of the EU in the employment and social affairs area and to contribute to the Lisbon agenda.
3. Section four of the PROGRESS programme supports the effective implementation of the principle of non-discrimination by:

“Raising awareness, disseminating information and promoting the debate about the key challenges and policy issues in relation to discrimination and the mainstreaming of anti-discrimination in all Community policies, including among the social partners, NGOs and other stakeholders.”
4. Any European-level funding under this scheme must add value to existing or planned national awareness-raising activities.
5. Up to €250,000 per Member State is available from the Commission. The Government Equalities Office can give a mandate to apply for funding to one or two projects. The maximum EU contribution to any application will not exceed 80% of the action's eligible costs. Beneficiaries therefore must guarantee co-financing for the remaining 20%. Contributions in kind are not accepted as part of co-financing. Activities must have a maximum initial duration of 12 months.
6. **Proposals must be with the Government Equalities Office no later than 10:00 GMT on 19 June 2012** to enable them to be considered for being given a mandate to apply for funding. Applications awarded a mandate must then be submitted to the European Commission by 12:00 CET, 28 June 2012.

7. The European Commission's objectives for the call for proposals (section 2.1) are to support national authorities in charge of equality and non-discrimination in:
 - developing their national policy to combat discrimination and promote equality beyond legislation
 - fostering the dissemination of information on EU and national policy and legislation in the non discrimination field
 - identifying best practices which could be transferable to other participating countries.
8. The Commission wishes to support activities that tackle **at least one** of the following **5 grounds of discrimination: race and ethnic origin, disability, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation**. Applicants must explain how gender was taken into account when planning and implementing the activities.
9. The Commission is encouraging activities on the following topics in particular:
 - Non discrimination mainstreaming
 - Diversity management in the public and private sector
 - Roma
 - Multiple discrimination
 - Measurement of discrimination
 - Discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief.
10. Projects which may be financed under this call may include the following activities:
 - Training activities in the non discrimination field
 - Identification, analysis, promotion and dissemination of good practices on non discrimination
 - Organisation of awareness raising events on equality issues, including diversity awards.
 - Carrying out studies or surveys at national level aiming at a better understanding of the phenomenon of discrimination and the situation of discriminated groups especially on the labour market.
11. Please note that neither the topics nor the activities listed above are exhaustive. The Government Equalities Office will consider all topics and activities that meet the priorities and challenges set out in this document.
12. The call for proposals also requires the UK Government to set out its priorities and challenges for 2012-13 at national level in the fight against discrimination. These are set out below.
13. Proposals submitted in response to this call should take into account both the European Commission's priority themes set out above and the UK priorities and challenges set out below.

UK PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR 2012 IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

14. The priorities for the Government for the coming year are set out below. These, and the priority themes and types of activities set out by the European Commission in section 2.2 and 2.3 of the call for proposals (summarised in paragraph 9-10 above), should be taken into account when preparing applications.
15. Applications must clearly explain which of the priorities they address and how they have taken account of them.

Supporting the Government's economic growth agenda

16. Managing the UK's economy through global economic turbulence and unprecedented levels of national deficit has shaped the Government's priorities, including on equalities and discrimination. Maximising the contribution that all citizens and businesses can make is central to a successful and sustained economic recovery. There is a need to identify and tackle the barriers and challenges that prevent people from achieving their economic potential or that hold them back in the workplace.

Changing culture and removing barriers

17. Despite having some of the most comprehensive equality laws in the world, inequality still persists in the UK. Very often attitudes and culture can be powerful factors in preventing people from achieving their goals and living their lives to the full. For example, many gay and transgendered people still suffer from intolerance which leads to issues such as being bullied in school or reluctance to participate in sport. Disabled people are currently under-represented in public life and may need practical support to overcome the various obstacles that prohibit their full participation. Older people may face discrimination and not be treated with dignity and respect in health care. Young people face unrealistic and distorted images of body perfection which can affect their self-esteem and confidence. Attitudes should be challenged and cultural change inspired in creative ways to create the right conditions for achieving fairer outcomes for all.

Promoting simplification, reform and support

18. The Government is creating a new framework for equality focussed on simplification, the rolling back of unnecessary or bureaucratic processes, increasing transparency through equality reporting, and timely and proportionate consideration of equality in decision-making. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is being reformed to ensure that is a valued national institution focussing on those areas where it can add value and deliver better value for money; legislation has been streamlined and a lighter-touch public sector Equality Duty has been introduced. We have also been getting rid of bureaucracy and making it easier for businesses to comply with legislation; providing new information and advice for individuals and businesses needing support; and working with data developers and social media entrepreneurs to identify more ways to drive transparency, increase democratic accountability and drive culture change.

Northern Ireland Priorities

19. The PROGRESS funding is UK wide and applications are welcome from organisations based in Northern Ireland. The priorities for NI should support the types of activities and priority themes set out in section 2 of the call for proposals and should support activities which tackle at least one of the following **5 grounds of discrimination**: race and ethnic origin, disability, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Process and timetable for applications

20. **Proposals must be received by the Government Equalities Office no later than 10:00 GMT on 19 June 2012** to enable them to be considered for being given a mandate to apply for funding.

21. Submitted proposals must consist of only the following completed documents initially:

- The main PROGRESS Antidiscrimination Action Grants application form (reference: JUST/2012/PROG/AG/AD).
- Annex 1 to the application form – “Project description and Implementation form”; and
- 1 side of A4 (Aerial 12 pt) providing a detailed description for the various items listed in Section 2.3 of the application relating to “Project Budget Information”.

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND ADDITIONAL MATERIALS OR ANNEXES AT THIS STAGE
AS THEY WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED**

22. Submit the specified documents by email to: **paul.howarth@geo.gsi.gov.uk**

23. Once the Government Equalities Office has selected the proposal(s) it wishes to award a mandate to, the remaining Annexes to the application form must be supplied. Successful proposals awarded a mandate must then be submitted to the European Commission **by 12:00 CET, 28 June 2012.**

24. To discuss this call for proposals please contact **Paul Howarth on 020 7035 8098.**