

Withdrawn

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The European Social Fund (ESF) programme for 2007 to 2013 in England and Gibraltar has closed.

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GUIDANCE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ESF
2007 – 2013 PROGRAMME IN ENGLAND AND GIBRALTAR

Manual 3

Non CFO beneficiary requirements and guidance

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3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This manual sets out the requirements for managing ESF operations and projects outside of the main co-financing arrangements and for Technical Assistance projects. This guidance takes full account of the ESF Operational Programme, national rules and the Structural Fund regulations. The Structural Fund regulations relevant to the delivery of ESF funded activity are:-

- **Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006** – laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund as amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2010 concerning certain provisions relating to financial management.
- **Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006** of the European Parliament and of the Council – on the European Social Fund as amended by Regulation (EC) No 396/2009 of the European Parliament and of the European Council to extend the types of costs eligible for a contribution from the ESF.
- **Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006** – setting out rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 – the “implementing regulations” as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) No 832/2010.

3.1.2 Under the Structural Fund regulations, an organisation responsible for spending ESF funds is called a “beneficiary”. A beneficiary is defined in Council Regulation 1083/2006 as:-

“an operator, body or firm, whether public or private, responsible for initiating or initiating and implementing operations. In the context of aid schemes under Article 107 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, beneficiaries are public or private firms carrying out an individual project and receiving public aid”.

3.1.3 Note that individuals who are supported through ESF activity are referred to as ‘participants’. ESF eligibility rules which apply equally to CFO and non CFO managed provision are included in Manual 1 of the ESF guidance. Any changes to this guidance will be notified on the ESF website. ESF Division will update this guidance on a regular basis and highlight any changes made. ESF beneficiaries will be bound by any changes to the guidance notified on the ESF website.

3.2 Circumstances

3.2.1 Whilst the vast majority of ESF funded activity in the Convergence and phasing in areas is delivered through co-financing, in exceptional circumstances some activities can be managed by a process of application for a grant. The types of circumstances where this might happen are, for example:-

- a CFO does not have sufficient match funding to cover all the activities within a priority.
- no CFO has a remit for the particular type of activity needed to deliver the regional ESF framework – the Convergence priorities cover a wider range of activities than those for the competitiveness and employment priorities.

3.2.2 As there are no CFOs in Gibraltar, the guidance in this section applies to

all Gibraltar projects. In non phasing regional and competitiveness areas all activity except Technical Assistance and ITM is fully co-financed.

3.3 Calls for proposals and applications

3.3.1 In the circumstances described above, as was the case particularly in the first half of the programme, the Managing Authority may issue calls for project proposals that might be confined to, for example,

- a specific type of activity
- a specific target group
- a specific geographical area
- combinations of the above.

3.3.2 This should not be confused with the “alternative bidding” system used in the 2000-2006 programmes as the calls for proposals outside Gibraltar will have very specific targeting. The application form to be used is at annex 1.

3.4 Appraisal of applications.

3.4.1 Applications will be appraised by staff from the Managing Authority, London Intermediate Body or from the Government of Gibraltar to judge to what extent the expected criteria are met. The intention is not to judge how well the form has been completed, but whether the proposed project and delivery arrangements will provide a best fit with the provision that is required and will be delivered in a way that meets regulations.

3.4.2 In order to have a transparent system that differentiates between separate applications, a rating system as follows will be used for the items in the application:

- **Excellent** – consistently strong in all aspects of the criterion;
- **Good** – consistently good in all aspects of the criterion. Minor weaknesses are capable of remedy and compensated for by strengths in other areas;
- **Acceptable** - weaknesses are capable of remedy but need to be addressed prior to contract or subject to specific conditions in offer letter, or;
- **Unacceptable** – the information provided is insufficient to allow for an effective assessment to be made or assessor satisfied that criterion cannot be met.

3.4.3 Some questions are “gateway” questions as indicated in the appraisal framework below. If any gateway question is given a rating of “unacceptable”, it means that the whole application will be rejected.

3.4.4 Taking each question in turn, with the respective score for the question, the appraisal team will apply the expected standards and will make a formal signed and dated record of the appraisal. The appraisal criteria are at Annex 2. A copy of the appraisal pro-forma is at Annex 3.

3.4.5 If a project is not selected for funding the ESF Managing Authority will confirm this in writing, giving the arrangements for feedback. The letter will also explain the appeals procedure. There are only two grounds for appeal. That the appraisers:

- demonstrated bias against the project proposal, or
- made a decision no reasonable person would make.

3.4.6 The call for proposals for innovative and transnational projects was carried out in 2008-9. There will not be a further call for this type of project.

3.5 Applications for Technical Assistance (TA)

3.5.1 In broad terms, Technical Assistance is eligible to support:

- preparatory, management, monitoring, evaluation, information and control activities of the Operational Programme;
- activities to reinforce the administrative capacity for implementing the funds at national and regional levels;
- the Operational Programme's publicity and communication strategy;
- support for the cross-cutting themes of gender equality and equal opportunities and sustainable development;
- the development and implementation of programme monitoring and evaluation systems;
- support for the delivery of transnational and inter-regional activity;
- support to third sector networks to support participation by voluntary and community organisations in the programme, and ;
- in the Convergence Objective only, technical assistance can be used to invest in administrative capacity to facilitate programme delivery and strengthen capacity in input analysis and evaluation, including supporting the implementation of the programme in such a way that it is aligned with local strategies for Cornwall where appropriate.

3.5.2 Earlier in the programme calls were made for proposals for TA projects in some regions. However the Managing Authority no longer runs calls for proposals, prospective applicants are able to bid at any time. The ESF web site gives contact details.

3.5.3 Applications for Technical Assistance at national or local level must be in accordance with the Technical Assistance strategy approved by the Programme Monitoring Committee. This can be found at Manual 3, Annex 14.

3.5.4 Applications will be made on the form at Annex 4. Appraisal of applications for TA funding will follow the criteria at Annex 5 and be recorded on the pro-forma at Annex 6.

3.5.5 Further information regarding who to contact for TA applications can be found in the England TA strategy. This can be found at Manual 3, Annex 14.

3.6 Obligations

Project providers are required to use their best endeavours to deliver the activities, outputs and results set out in the application form and funding agreement, and contribute fully to expenditure targets required to meet the European Commission's N+2 targets.

3.7 Information and publicity

Introduction

3.7.1 This section of the guidance:

- sets out the information and publicity requirements for the management and delivery of activity covered by the application form.
- is supplemented by additional publicity information and resources on the ESF website (<https://www.gov.uk/dwp/esf-2007-2013>) including: the Communication Plan for the England and Gibraltar ESF programme for 2007-2013; downloadable versions of the 2007-2013 ESF logo and supporting guidance on its use; and information on the distribution and display of ESF plaques and posters.

Complying with Regulations

3.7.2 Project providers must acknowledge the financial support from the European Social Fund and European Union. Providers are responsible for ensuring that all ESF activity (and match funded activity if delivered separately from ESF funded activity)

- is publicised to project participants and the general public.
- complies with the information and publicity requirements of the Secretary of State as set out in the Funding Agreement; and the European Commission as set out in **articles 2-10 and Annex I of European Commission regulation (EC) No 1828/2006**

Information and Publicity

3.7.3 To meet the regulatory requirements, ESF providers, match funded providers and grant awarding bodies, and where appropriate community grant projects, must implement specific ESF information and publicity measures. These must include the following:

- displaying the 2007-2013 ESF logo (downloadable from <https://www.gov.uk/dwp/esf-2007-2013> along with supporting guidance) and references to financial support from the European Union on all information and publicity measures related to the 2007-2013 ESF programme. These include, but are not restricted to use on:
 - websites, e-communications, correspondence and literature used by the public and participants;
 - ESF programme documents such as application forms;
 - advertisements, press releases and other media targeted materials;
 - any other document concerning the administration of ESF activity.
- displaying an ESF plaque and ESF posters provided by the Managing Authority for the 2007-2013 programme on the main premises. In the case of community grants projects, ESF posters should be used. Plaques and posters are provided free of charge by the Managing Authority, and must be positioned in a prominent location where they are clearly visible to staff, participants and others using the building.

- providing details about the project to the Managing Authority for inclusion in the publicly accessible list of CFOs and projects.

3.7.4 In addition, the provider is required to undertake and/or support other measures to publicise the ESF programme that are agreed at national and regional levels and/or which may be required by the Managing Authority. Such measures may arise from:

- the Communication Plan for the 2007-2013 England and Gibraltar ESF Programme (and any updates to the Plan).
- the annual Information and Publicity Plan (developed each year by the Managing Authority).
- requests arising from the Programme Monitoring Committee and/or publicity network.
- requests made by the Managing Authority, which may include but are not restricted to the following:
 - planning and delivery of campaigns or events to publicise ESF;
 - developing and issuing press releases;
 - developing, maintaining and updating (complementary) ESF websites;
 - producing and distributing electronic and/or hard copy newsletters and/or other publicity materials such as booklets;
 - submitting news stories and case studies showcasing activities, outcomes and added value;
 - organising and publicising ESF visits by VIPs such as Government Ministers and representatives of the European Commission.

3.8 List of beneficiaries and operations

The Managing Authority maintains a list of beneficiaries and operations on the national ESF website. It lists the names of projects and the project providers, the amount of funding (i.e. sum of ESF and match funding) allocated to the project, and whether the project is live or closed.

The list is:

- generated from information supplied by CFOs and non co-financed projects to the Managing Authority.
- updated quarterly.
- shared with the European Commission and may also be used on the Commission's website

3.9 Provision of participant level management information

3.9.1 Project providers are responsible for ensuring that participants are eligible for ESF funded support (see Manual 1) and from the target groups in the ESF Operational Programme and regional ESF framework. Providers must report on participant outcomes and results accurately so that programme performance can be monitored and evaluated effectively and accurate feedback on performance can be provided to the England monitoring committee and the

European Commission.

3.9.2 Providers have to provide the Managing Authority with core information on all ESF and match funded participants. Information is collected when participants start and leave ESF and covers particular characteristics of each participant and the results achieved such as qualifications obtained or gained employment. Information on participants supplied to the Managing Authority is provided anonymously and complies with Data Protection Act requirements. The specific participant level management information is shown at Annex 8.

3.9.3 Providers are required to transfer participant level data electronically to ESF Division quarterly. Failure to submit participant data by required dates may result in payments being suspended.

3.9.4 Provision of data at participant level enables aggregation at various levels e.g. national, Local Authority, by Priority, by participant type. This enables programme managers to respond appropriately and quickly to emerging performance issues including progress towards outcome and results targets at provider, CFO and programme level. Data are also used to provide the European Commission with programme level data on ESF participants as required by Annex XXIII of the Implementing Regulation.

3.9.5 Core participant data are supplemented by participant follow-up surveys and other evaluation activity to ensure a full picture of programme performance and activity is available at all levels. There will be two national follow-up surveys of participants, the first of which reported in 2010 and a second survey to report in 2013 based on a sample of all participants selected by ESF evaluators. Providers are required to provide contact details for those participants selected for the surveys, having sought in advance the permission of the individuals concerned to be con

3.10 Quality

All activity that directly supports participants is subject to inspection by OFSTED, and the same quality standards apply equally to ESF and nationally funded provision. ESF funded activity must not be regarded or portrayed in any way as inferior other activity. Systems must be in place to ensure quality standards and continuous improvement. A copy of the Common Inspection Framework can be found on the OFSTED website at www.ofsted.gov.uk

3.11 Co-operation with audits

3.11.1 Providers must comply with requests from the ESF Audit Authority, National Audit Office, the European Commission, the European Court of Auditors and other authorised organisations to examine any documents held that relate to the delivery of ESF funded activity.

3.11.2 Providers must also provide access to premises where the relevant documentation is held and reasonable assistance (including the provision of onsite, photocopying, facsimile, and telecommunications facilities) to facilitate the examination of such documents.

3.12 State Aids

3.12.1 State Aid rules aim to ensure fair competition and a single common market. Giving favoured treatment to some businesses would:

- harm business competitors;
- risk distorting the normal competitive market;
- and hinder the long-term competitiveness of the Community.

3.12.2 That is why the European Community founding Treaty generally forbids State-funded aid that would favour certain businesses or goods production. The State Aid rules contribute to the effective functioning of the Single Market and European Union economic reform in two key ways:

- they prevent State Aid that would seriously distort competition - thereby helping to achieve a fair market for businesses in all Member States;
- they allow State Aid that promotes economic development and other legitimate policy objectives, where this benefit outweighs any distortion of competition.

3.12.3 There is no precise definition of what constitutes a state aid. However there is a very clear statement of principle that any form of aid to a commercial undertaking – whether provided directly by the state or provided indirectly through ‘State resources’ – is incompatible with the Single Market if it distorts or threatens to distort competition within the Community.

3.12.4 Aid to individuals and most grants to public and not-for-profit organisations, such as voluntary, charitable and cultural bodies, are not affected by State Aid rules. These organisations are only affected when they are involved in commercial activities or compete with commercial organisations.

3.12.5 For the 2007-2013 ESF programme the ESF and public match funding provided to providers in Priority 1 will not constitute state aid. Where ESF activity is supporting individuals to improve their employability and help them move closer to the labour market the aid is being provided to the individual and there are no direct benefits for enterprises. However for those elements of the programme in Priority 2 which provide support to individuals in employment there may be state aid implications because their employers are receiving support towards the costs of training. Where ESF supports individuals in employment to achieve full or part qualifications this may constitute an aid. However the State Aid Branch in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has concluded that the following should not be treated as giving a State Aid when delivered in the workplace:

- Full funding for literacy and numeracy at all levels
- Shared investment (employer and public funding) for ESOL at all levels
- Full funding for all Apprenticeships (including Advanced) delivered to 16-18
- Co-funding for Apprenticeships
- Co-funding for first Advanced Apprenticeships
- Full funding for first Level 2
- Full funding for Level 3 jumpers
- Full funding for first full level 3 for 19-25 year olds

3.12.6 The de minimus regulation covering the 2007 -13 programme allows an enterprise to receive up to €200,000 euros in aid from any public source including ESF over three fiscal years. The sterling equivalent to be determined at the time of the award using the prevailing exchange rate.

3.12.7 [Paragraph deleted]

3.12.8 Organisations using the de minimis rules must put in place a monitoring system to ensure the limit is not breached. Typically, such a monitoring system will involve:

- asking enterprises receiving support under their scheme to identify all other sources of support (either in cash or in kind) that they have received in the last three years;
- checking if previous de minimis aid is involved, to ensure that the combined assistance does not exceed €200,000 over any three-year rolling period. If the limit is breached, the aid may have to be reduced or refused to ensure the limit is not breached.

3.12.9 The BIS (Dept for Business, Innovation and Skills) State Aid Branch advises writing to each recipient in the following terms:

“The assistance for [...] constitutes State Aid as defined under Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union of Rome and is being granted as ‘de minimis’ aid under Commission Regulation EC/1998/2006. European Commission rules prohibit any undertaking from receiving more than €200,000 euros de minimis’ aid over a rolling three-year period. Any ‘de minimis’ aid granted over the €200,000 limit may be subject to repayment with interest. If you have received any ‘de minimis’ aid over the last three years (from any source) you should inform us immediately with details of the dates and amounts of aid received. Furthermore, information on this aid must be supplied to any other public authority or agency asking for information on ‘de minimis’ aid for the next three years.”

The Co-financing organisation should write to each recipient of de minimis state aid as above

3.12.10 Whilst de minimis rules are straightforward in principle they are difficult and complex to operate in practice because they are not project related and as such rely on individual enterprises being able to identify how much aid and under which schemes they have received support over a rolling three-year period. Where enterprises have exhausted their aid ceilings under de minimis, there is no capacity for further aid through ESF.

3.12.11 [Paragraph deleted].

3.12.12 The General Block Exemption regulation (GBER) was adopted by the European Commission in late September 2008 which requires aided companies to contribute a proportion of the costs of the aid - unlike the financial ceiling of de minimis rules.

3.12.13 ESF Division has not notified the 2007-2013 programme under the GBER for a number of reasons:

- The ESF Division view is that ESF 2007-2013 is a programme aimed at individuals - their employment and their skills - and that the vast majority of the funding as detailed in the Operational Programme is for individuals. Only a small number of programmes and schemes offer support to companies;
- Traditionally State Aids in ESF was always dealt with using de minimis. However in the 2000-2006 ESF programmes - where a substantial amount of private match funding was used by the thousands of direct bid projects - ESFD notified the programme under the training and employment aid block exemption (the precursors to the GBER). In the

- 2007-2013 programme there are very few direct bidders and no private match is permitted;
- Block exemptions require the body that nominated the scheme (in 2000-2006, ESFD) to report annually - and on demand during spot inspections - on the amount of aid granted to each individual enterprise. The European Commission and BIS both showed concern in 2000-2006 that ESFD were too far removed from the operation to report correctly. ESFD are even more removed from the individual operation in the current programme.

For these reasons we have not put forward the ESF 2007-2013 programme as a notified scheme under the GBER.

3.12.14 Provision funded wholly by ESF that falls within the scope of State Aids must follow the requirements of the de minimis rules outlines above. Some Skills Funding Agency provision that is used as match funding has been notified under the General Block Exemption Regulation; in these cases it is the responsibility of the Skills Funding Agency CFO to make sure that its own State Aids guidance is being followed.

3.13 Match funding

3.13.1 Match funding is an essential part of how ESF works. ESF can only meet part of the costs of eligible activity with the balance provided by match funding. Providers are required to provide or obtain from other sources the necessary public match funding to draw down ESF. In the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly convergence objective, match funding must contribute at least 25% of total eligible project costs. In the competitiveness and employment objective match funding must contribute at least 50% of the total eligible costs. Match funding for the phasing-in regions of South Yorkshire and Merseyside must come **only** from within those regions as the allocations (both ESF and match funding) are ring fenced.

3.13.2 Match funding must come from the public sector – “public match funding”. Details of the source and amount of public match funding must be set out in the application form. Private and “in kind” match funding cannot be used. If organisations other than the provider supply some or all of the match funding, a Public Match Funding Certificate (PMFC) must be attached to the application form for each organisation providing match funding. A copy of the PMFC is at Annex 7. For the avoidance of doubt, where any organisation other than the applicant is providing match funding then a PMFC must be provided.

3.13.3 The responsibilities of public match funders are to:-

- contribute to the actual eligible costs of the project;
- inform the project provider and the Managing Authority about any changes to the match funding they are providing;
- make sure the funds are in line with the criteria for public match funding;
- make sure the funds used to attract ESF are eligible;

3.13.4 Although the PMFC should not be considered a legal agreement it is considered prudent to make a formal agreement with the match funder(s) to make sure that they will:

- provide the amount set down in the PMFC;
- fulfil their responsibilities set out in the PMFC;
- allow representatives from the EC, DWP, other government bodies, and any other relevant monitoring bodies access to match funding records; and
- maintain clear records as required by EC and ESF regulations and guidance.

3.13.5 A public match funder is an organisation which directly or indirectly receives over 50% of its main funding from central or local government (excluding any EU funding). (This does not include payment for work carried out by private enterprises for the public sector.)

3.13.6 Non-profit making organisations, whether incorporated or unincorporated, registered with the Charity Commission or CIC Regulator for Community Interest Companies (CIC) can supply public match funding. The registration must be maintained throughout the period of the claim for ESF support. For fuller information contact the Charities Commission or CIC Regulator websites. Individuals from an unincorporated organisation may be personally liable if there is any need to repay ESF.

3.14 Eligible expenditure

Detailed guidance on the eligibility of expenditure, which applies both to ESF and match funding, is in Manual 1, see section 1.10 and 1.11.

3.15 Profiling

3.15.1 Accurate profiling of planned ESF expenditure is essential for effective financial planning at all levels. Financial profiles enable the Managing Authority to develop financial plans and so ensure that funds are in place to pay providers promptly. Profiles are also used to provide annual financial forecasts which the European Commission uses for its financial planning.

3.15.2 Once the application form has been agreed, the provider is required to produce a profile of expenditure at Priority level. The profile breaks down the ESF and match funding agreed in the application form into quarterly periods. The profile periods are standard, and end on the last day of February, May, August and November. The profile also includes any anticipated project revenue. In addition to financial profiles, providers are also required to profile their participant starts

3.16 Making claims

3.16.1 The claims procedure enables providers to declare eligible expenditure included in the funding agreement and for the Managing Authority to make payments based on expenditure declared. The Managing Authority will not make advance payments to providers. It will reimburse providers for actual ESF expenditure declared. There will be no retention of payments, and final claims will be paid in full subject to satisfactory submission of the final claim.

3.16.2 Interim and final claim arrangements are summarised below. Detailed information on claim and payment arrangements are provided in the guidance notes for INES, the web based IT system that is used for making claims on-line. For guidance on variations to agreements please see paragraph 3.16.10

Interim claims

3.16.3 Providers must submit interim claims for payment for the quarters ending on the last day of February, May, August and November, within 20 working days of the quarter end. The Managing Authority must be informed if this timetable cannot be met. There is scope to submit claims outside of these periods if the need arises.

3.16.4 Interim claims must include only expenditure for the period covered by the claim together with any expenditure for previous periods that has not been previously declared. Claims must show the amount of ESF and match funding and a breakdown of expenditure by staff costs, participant costs, other costs, and any revenue received. Providers are also required to declare any ineligible expenditure included in previous claims by making voluntary adjustments and recoveries of funds identified and confirmed as irregularities from previous claim periods.

3.16.5 Where actual expenditure varies by more than plus or minus 15%, providers must provide a reason for the variance. If the next quarterly claim also has variances in excess of 15%, providers must supply a revised profile with that claim.

3.16.6 The number of participant starts in the period must also be provided and providers must have supplied participant management information for the period up to the end date of the previous interim claim.

3.16.7 [Paragraph deleted]

3.16.8 The requirement to provide in-period expenditure claims is a change from the arrangements for 2000-2006 ESF programmes when providers declared expenditure cumulatively. The provision of in-period claims will enable more effective reconciliation and reporting of the recovery of irregularities and any ineligible expenditure included in previous claims – a requirement of the Structural Fund regulations.

Final claims

3.16.9 The claim for final payment is similar in format to the interim claim and provides the final declaration of expenditure and revenue for the agreement.

Variation to agreements

3.16.10 When preparing a claim, the Managing Authority must be informed if there have been any changes to your project. Reasons for this might include:-

- any change to the Total Project Costs in the agreement
- significantly (+/- 15%) different allocation between budget headings from the application, even if the overall Total Project Costs remain the same.
- significantly different outputs/targets (n/a for TA projects)
- any changes to project period.
- any changes to the activity you were approved to do.

All requests to make changes should be completed on the "Technical Assistance and non-CFO Projects – Variation to Agreement Request" form at annex 13.

3.17 Document retention

3.17.1 [Paragraph deleted]

3.17.2 The rules regarding document retention apply to all organisations involved in delivering and administering structural funds - that is the Managing Authority, Certifying Authority, Audit Authority, any intermediate bodies, co-financing organisations and their providers and non-CFO applicants.

3.17.3 Under Structural Fund regulations, organisations are required to retain documents (that is all documents including match documentation where appropriate) until three years after the European Commission makes the final payment for the programme concerned. This will mean that documents will need to be retained until 31st December 2022 at the earliest. The Managing Authority will advise beneficiaries of the final date for document retention when it receives the final programme payment from the Commission. The rules on retention of documents apply equally to those documents relating to unsuccessful bidders for ESF support.

Electronic retention of documents

3.17.4 Commission regulations allow for documents to be retained as originals or 'in versions certified to be in conformity with the originals on commonly accepted data carriers'.

3.17.5 The regulations allow for the electronic storage of documents provided that they are stored on a recognized data carrier, are certified as being copies of the original, meet national standards and are auditable. Documents must be held on an accepted data carrier. These include:

- photocopies of original documents;
- microfiches of original documents;
- scanned versions of original documents

3.17.6 For each data carrier used, a provider must retain a signed declaration that the documents held within the data carrier are certified as being true copies (conforming to) the originals.

The following declaration on provider headed paper satisfies this requirement:

Name of organisation

Name/title of ESF supported projects

I certify that this data carrier [specify details of carrier] contains true copies of original documents relating to ESF supported projects

Signed..... Name.....Date.....

Position in organisation.....

3.17.7 All organisations involved in the delivery of ESF must keep electronic copies for the same length of time as required for paper copies. It is the organisation's responsibility to ensure that the electronic copy of the document can be relied on for audit purposes.

3.18 Audit Trail

3.18.1 Article 60 (f) of Commission Regulation 1083/2006 requires an adequate audit trail to be established. Article 15 of Commission Regulation 1828/2006 outlines the criteria which must be met in order that the Commission may regard an audit trail as adequate. These are that the audit trail:

- 'permits the aggregate amounts certified to the Commission to be reconciled with the detailed accounting records and supporting documents held by the certifying authority, the Managing Authority, intermediate bodies and beneficiaries as regards operations co-financed under the operational programme;
- permits verification of payment of the public contribution to the beneficiary;
- permits verification of application of the selection criteria established by the monitoring committee for the operational programme;
- contains(.....) the technical specifications and financing plan, documents concerning the grant approval, documents relating to public procurement procedures, progress reports and reports on verifications and audits carried out.'

3.18.2 This requirement means a sufficient audit trail must be maintained by the Managing Authority, at Intermediate bodies, at Co-financing Organisations (CFOs) and at the project delivery level. Audit trails should enable auditors to verify that:

- there is evidence to support the claim and that expenditure has/had been incurred in a proper manner;
- financial management is/was sound;
- applicants comply/ complied with EC regulations and the requirements of their contract;
- interim and project closure report entries are/were supported by evidence of expenditure; and,
- the project represented value for money.

3.19 Cross cutting themes

3.19.1 There are two cross-cutting themes:

- gender equality and equal opportunities; and
- sustainable development (which incorporates environmental sustainability).

3.19.2 EU Regulations require these themes to be promoted during the various stages of the implementation of the programme. The cross-cutting themes, and the providers role in promoting them, will be evaluated during the life of the programme. Their implementation is also covered by monitoring and audit activities. All providers are expected to comply with relevant legislation.

3.19.3 Cross-cutting themes are promoted through the dual approach of:

- mainstreaming the themes into the delivery of all projects; and
- supporting specific actions (for example, activities aimed to improve

women's participation, or to provide training in environmental management).

3.19.4 Application forms should demonstrate how the project will:

- actively promote equal opportunities and gender equality and build them into implementation arrangements;
- build sustainable development (including environmental sustainability) into implementation arrangements;
- help support region-specific cross cutting theme priorities as described in the regional ESF framework for the region.

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities

3.19.5 Providers must take appropriate steps to actively promote equal opportunities in line with their public duty under domestic legislation as well as prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the various stages of implementation, especially in the access of participants to projects. In particular, they must take account of accessibility for disabled people. Providers must ensure any sub-contractors or partners also take appropriate steps to promote equal opportunities and prevent discrimination.

3.19.6 The Managing Authority will examine progress in implementing the cross-cutting themes (including the targets on the participation of women, ethnic minorities, disabled people and older people) when it holds reviews with providers. Providers are expected to explain action taken to address any under-performance. The Managing Authority may request case studies and examples of good practice (for publicity purposes).

Sustainable Development

3.19.7 Providers will be encouraged to take sustainable development into account in their delivery including taking appropriate action to reduce or mitigate the environmental impact of projects.

3.19.8 The developmental approach will require providers who do not already have a sustainable development policy and implementation plan covering environmental sustainability to prepare an appropriate policy and implementation plan within the first year of delivering their project. The policy statement should as a minimum cover issues such as:-

- compliance with relevant environmental legislation (for example, Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations);
- reduction of waste and energy consumption;
- promotion of recycling
- a commitment to at least explore ways of minimising private transport use and promote public transport usage.

3.19.9 If the provider already has a sustainable development policy and plan which incorporates the above and will cover ESF activity, then it need not produce an additional policy statement and plan. Further guidance and training on Sustainable Development will be developed by the Managing Authority.

3.20 Complementarity with other EU-funded programmes

3.20.1 Where appropriate, ESF activities may complement activities financed through other EU programmes. However, ESF activities must not duplicate activities financed by other EU programmes, and must not support activities which would otherwise be financed by other EU programmes.

European Regional Development Fund Programmes

3.20.2 ESF skills and employment actions may complement European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) activity as identified in regional ESF frameworks. The Operational Programme is not expected to finance activities that fall within the scope of ERDF.

Rural Development and Fisheries Programmes

3.20.3 The Operational Programme contains the following demarcation criteria with the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Fisheries Fund. ESF funding is not available for interventions that target enterprises engaged in agriculture, forestry or fisheries, or enterprises engaged in the primary processing of agricultural, forestry or fisheries products. ESF cannot fund activities which support agri-food schemes or the primary processing of agricultural and/or forestry products. ESF cannot support specific vocational training for individuals employed in enterprises engaged in these activities. However, ESF can support basic skills and other generic training for individuals employed in enterprises engaged in these activities. These principles also apply to the European Fisheries Fund in respect of fish and shellfish products and processing.

European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund

3.20.4 There are no plans to use European Investment Bank or European Investment Fund initiatives such as JEREMIE and JESSICA. Any queries about these initiatives should be referred to the Managing Authority.

Lifelong Learning and Youth in Action Programmes

3.20.5 [Paragraph deleted]

Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development

3.20.6 In the Convergence Objective, ESF can support the development of human potential in research and innovation. Priority 5 includes research activities that support training of researchers and post-graduate studies, where related to the knowledge economy, labour market and human capital. These research activities must be linked to employment and skills needs now and in the future. They should complement but not duplicate any research projects in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly funded by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development.

3.21 Social partner joint actions in the Convergence objective

3.21.1 As required by the ESF Regulation, an appropriate amount of the ESF Convergence allocation will be available for social partner capacity-building activities, which can include training, networking measures, strengthening the

social dialogue and activities jointly undertaken by the social partners. It is envisaged that this amount will be 2% of the ESF resources for Priority 5. This will enable social partners to contribute to the delivery of Convergence ESF activities and outcomes.

3.21.2 Joint actions with the social partners, particularly employers' organisations and trade unions, will be encouraged to ensure that this is achieved. These are likely to include activities to provide better access to training and development in the local workforce, and the support and development of social enterprises. Further information is set out in the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly ESF Framework.

3.22 [Section deleted]

3.23 Community Grants (Merseyside Phasing-in area only)

Overview

3.23.1 ESF Community Grants enable small third sector organisations, that would not otherwise be able to access ESF, to access small grants through simplified application arrangements. Grants focus on progression towards the labour market and are not intended to duplicate provision that is available through mainstream ESF activity. Grants strengthen the ability of small third sector organisations to deliver employment and skills activities to disadvantaged people.

3.23.2 Arrangements to support Community Grants build on good practice developed in the Objective 3 Global Grants programme.

Grant Co-ordinating Bodies

3.23.3 ESF Community Grants are awarded and administered by Grant Co-ordinating Bodies. Whilst Community Grants are delivered primarily through Co-financing arrangements in England, non-CFO delivery has been agreed in the Merseyside phasing-in area to enable activities supported under the Objective 1 programme to be finished off. The Grant Co-ordinating Body in Merseyside has been selected through a call for proposals and provides all required public match funding. The Grant Co-ordinating Body is responsible for:

- publicising the availability of grants and making calls for applications in line with agreed regional priorities;
- selecting successful third sector applicants, agreeing level of approved grant and planned outcomes (for many grant awards outcomes are likely to focus on progress towards mainstream ESF and other provision);
- providing support, where necessary, to grant recipients to help them manage ESF effectively;
- monitoring performance and delivery of grant recipients and reporting back to the CFO.

Eligible activity

3.23.4 ESF Community Grants support a range of activities aimed at assisting the disadvantaged or excluded to move closer to the labour market by improving their access to mainstream ESF and domestic employment and skills

provision. Activities support participants from the target groups in the Operational Programme but because the focus is on individuals who have difficulty in accessing ESF or mainstream provision, outcomes are more likely to be based on progression rather than achievement of jobs and qualifications.

3.23.5 Grants must not be used to duplicate provision that is available through other ESF co-financing – they provide support to hardest to reach communities and individuals to access and succeed in this or other provision. The small third sector organisations that access grants are likely to be well placed to reach excluded individuals facing barriers which hinder access to the mainstream. The grants support a wide range of activities including:

- initial help with basic skills;
- taster work experience including voluntary work;
- training, advice and counselling;
- jobsearch assistance including the provision of equipment and other assistance necessary to secure employment;
- confidence building, and;
- first contact engagement activities, for example to provide support to engage individuals with barriers in a non-threatening environment.

3.23.6 In addition there is limited scope (up to 10% of the ESF available to support Community Grants) for grants to provide support to small third sector organisations themselves. Such support might include:

- training for staff and volunteers in third sector organisations on mainstream routes to employment and training, and;
- actions to support the development of delivery and accreditation arrangements in-house.

Care should be taken to avoid funding activities that are more appropriate for Technical Assistance.

3.23.7 If there are situations where third sector organisations have common needs, for example accreditation of staff for a particular qualification it might be more cost effective for the Co-ordinating Body to provide this through the provision of a service rather than a grant.

Funding

3.23.8 ESF Community Grants operate in priority 1 of the Operational Programme. Up to 4% of Merseyside's Priority 1 allocation for 2007-2010 may be allocated to Community Grant activity. The maximum amount of ESF grant awarded is £15,000 per small third sector organisation per year. (Up to 31 December 2013 the upper limit for individual Community Grants was £12,000)

Delivery arrangements

3.23.9 The separate Community Grants scheme in Merseyside takes account, if necessary, of any priorities for targeting Community Grants in the regional ESF framework.

3.23.10 Payments are not be based on the achievement of specific results and

outputs in the ESF Operational Programme. Whilst Community Grants do contribute to ESF objectives overall by helping individuals to move closer to mainstream activity they might not contribute directly to the achievement of the participant, job and NVQ output and results targets.

3.23.11 Community Grants are awarded by the Grant Co-ordinating Body to small third sector organisations to support particular groups and achieve agreed outcomes and objectives. It is a requirement to capture and report on the outcomes achieved by the grant recipients including soft outcomes.

3.23.12 Grant Co-ordinating Bodies need an appropriate level of resource to meet their administration costs. Payment arrangements reflect necessary administration costs and provide the cash-flow for co-ordinating bodies and grant recipients where necessary. The Managing Authority has agreed an appropriate level of administration costs as part of the application and approval process.

Allocation of grants

3.23.13 The Grant Co-ordinating Body is required to allocate grants to small third sector organisations through an open, transparent and competitive process. It should advertise the call for applications for small grants widely and specify what activities can be supported including any targeting of participant groups. The Grant Co-ordinating Body must use simplified application procedures to ensure that small third sector organisations are able to apply for grants when applications are called for.

3.23.14 The allocation of grants is made on the basis of selecting third sector applicants against specific criteria set out in calls for grant applications. Selection arrangements must be clear and transparent and published alongside the call for applications. A list of third sector organisations who are awarded grants following the selection process must be published. Grant recipients receive 100% ESF.

3.23.15 Given the nature of the grants and delivery through small third sector organisations, it is not appropriate to award them through full open and competitive tendering arrangements. As the grants themselves are not awarded through tendering, grant recipients are required to maintain records of actual grant expenditure to ensure a full audit trail.

3.23.16 Grant recipients should keep the following participant information:

- Details of all participants supported through Community Grants;
- Results of participant achievements including employment, full or part qualifications, soft outcomes;

3.23.17 Grant recipients should also keep the following financial records:

- Invoices to support all expenditure
- Bank statements
- Staff timesheets, job descriptions, expenses payments

3.23.18 Original documents (paper or scanned copies) must be maintained until advised by the Grant Co-ordinating Body.

Monitoring and reporting arrangements

3.23.19 Reports on progress are provided to the Programme Monitoring Committee. The Grant Co-ordinating Body needs to ensure that reporting arrangements fully reflect the objectives and priorities of the Merseyside Community Grant scheme.

3.23.20 To ensure that certain key information on progress can be provided to the Programme Monitoring Committee and reported for example in the Annual Implementation Report, Grant Co-ordinating Bodies are required to supply the following key data to the Managing Authority:

- number of applications for grants received;
- number of grants awarded;
- average value of grants awarded;
- number of participants supported through grants;
- achievement of soft outcomes, jobs and qualifications;
- short case studies of how grants have supported specific targets groups and specific outcomes achieved (case studies to be provided for 10% of completed projects, and ;
- summary of how grants are supporting regional priorities

ANNEX 1 Application To Manage A Project

Region	
Priority	

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – ENGLAND 2007-2013 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME APPLICATION TO MANAGE A PROJECT PART FUNDED BY ESF

From an organisation not operating as a Co-Financing Organisation.

Please complete this form in full. Delete the explanatory notes before submitting. You should refer to the ESF eligibility rules when completing the application. Contact ESF Division for electronic version of this form.

Part 1: Applicant Details

1.1. Name of Organisation

1.2. Address

1.3. Contact name and Position

1.4. Telephone number

1.5. Fax number

1.6. Email

Part 2: Project length

Please provide the anticipated start and end date of the project. The start date will be formally agreed with the Managing Authority if your application is successful. The end date is the date that you anticipate ESF activity will finish.

2.1. Start date

2.2. End date

Part 3: Project Description and contribution to the regional ESF framework

3.1. Project Name

3.2. Project description.

NOTES

In no more than 500 words, briefly;

- Explain how the project will address the priorities described in the “call for proposals”
- Describe the activities that your project will support, the participants you will target and expected outcomes and results. A detailed breakdown of the planned participants and outputs and results should be provided at annex 1.
- Show the key milestones you intend to achieve in the first year of the project e.g. participant starts, progress towards output and results targets.

3.3 Sub-contracting

Will any part of this project be sub-contracted to other organisations? If so, how will you select sub-contractors, manage their performance and ensure value for money?

3.4 Added Value – detail what added value ESF funding will give to this project?

Describe what value ESF funding will add to this project e.g. will it increase the number of people trained or supported, will it increase the number of outputs and results that will be achieved, will it enhance the quality of provision or will it enable activity to take place that otherwise would not.

Part 4: State Aids

4.1. Will any activity funded through this project be a State Aid?

Yes/No
If no explain why

4.2. State aids processes

NOTE

If you have answered yes, please describe how you will comply with State Aid regulations.

See the form guidance for more information.

Part 5: Cross cutting themes

5.1. Equal opportunities theme. Describe how you will implement the cross-cutting theme of 'gender equality and equal opportunities' within your project.

How will you ensure that projects fulfil the principles of gender equality and equality of opportunity for all (Art 16 of Regulation 1083/2006)?
Please describe how you will support the themes and targets for gender equality and equal opportunities set out in the Operational Programme.

5.2. Sustainable development theme. Describe how you will implement the cross-cutting theme of 'sustainable development' within your project

How will you implement approaches to sustainable development, including environmental sustainability set out in the ESF Operational Programme 2007-2013?

Part 6: Capacity

You need to demonstrate that you have sufficient capacity to carry out the responsibilities of managing an ESF project. Please give evidence of capacity in terms of:-

6.1. Management arrangements

Detail the arrangements you will put in place to ensure that the project will be effectively managed.

6.2. People – the number and experience of staff working with ESF including as much detail as possible about the intended roles and responsibilities of staff involved with this project.

Detail how many staff will be involved in the management and delivery of the project and explain their roles and responsibilities. Demonstrate that the staff who will be involved have the appropriate experience and skills.

6.3. Accounting systems

Accounting systems need to be able to record and account for ESF funds separately and to identify match funding so that there is no double counting. The systems need to meet audit trail requirements described in Article 15 of Regulation 1828/2006

6.4. Monitoring and audit

How will you ensure that all the costs claimed are eligible and that all aspects of project activity are monitored against planned financial and output and results targets?

6.5. Management information

Give details of how data relating to individual participants will be collected and collated.

Please confirm that you will be able to supply the core participant data for ESF and match funded participants as shown in annex 2.

If confirmation cannot be given, state which data variables cannot be supplied

6.6. Evaluation

How will the overall effectiveness of the project be evaluated?

6.7. Quality

ESF funded provision will be subject to inspection by OFSTED

What systems are in place to ensure quality standards and continuous improvement?

6.8. Publicity

Publicity requirements are detailed in Article 8 of regulation 1828/2006.

Please describe how you will meet these requirements for ALL participants – funded both through ESF and match funding.

Part 7: Financial Viability

If you are not a public body, please provide the information in the boxes below. The definition of a public body is covered in the ESF guidance. The information will be used to assess financial viability.

7.1. What is your organisation's Legal Status

7.2 Please confirm that you have audited accounts for the last three years and could supply them on request.

7.3 Provide details of your auditor's name and address

7.4 How long has your organisation been in existence?

Part 8: Track Record

NOTE
Describe if your organisation received previous ESF support during the 2000-2006 Programmes giving details of your most recent dossier number. Briefly explain how the ESF funding was used and what the project achieved. Please also describe any other government funded projects that your organisation has managed in the same period.

Part 9: Expected Project Expenditure Details

Note: You should refer to the ESF eligibility rules when completing part 9.

9.1. Staff costs – show the expected staff cost for each calendar year of the project.

Year	Name of post	Amount
Total		

Note – insert more rows if required

9.2. Expected participant costs – show the expected participant related cost for each calendar year of the project.

Year	Description of expected costs	Amount
	Total	

9.3. Expected direct other costs – show the expected other costs for each calendar year of the project that are considered direct costs.

9.3A. Premises related direct costs

Year	Description of expected cost	Amount

9.3B. Depreciation items direct costs

Year	Item to be depreciated	Description of depreciation method to be used	Current value of item	Depreciation charge
			Total	

9.3C. Other direct costs – show any other expected cost for each calendar year of the project.

Year	Description of expected cost	Amount
	Total	

9.4. Expected indirect other costs – show any expected indirect other cost for each calendar year of the project.

Year	Indirect cost item	Amount
	Total	

Please now complete Appendix 1. For every indirect cost you have identified in the table above show how your estimate was derived.

9.5. What proportion of total costs will be spent on administering the project?

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Part 10: Financial Summary

10.1. First year of project – show summary for the first calendar year of the project.

Year	20..	ESF eligible cost for year	
		Match funding for year	
		Revenue for year	
		Total project cost for year	

10.2. Second year of project – show summary for the second calendar year of the project.

Year	20..	ESF eligible cost for year	
		Match funding for year	
		Revenue for year	
		Total project cost for year	

10.3. Third year of project – show summary for the third calendar year of the project.

Year	20..	ESF eligible cost for year	
		Match funding for year	
		Revenue for year	
		Total project cost for year	

10.4. Fourth year of project – show summary for the third calendar year of the project.

Year	20..	ESF eligible cost for year	
		Match funding for year	
		Revenue for year	
		Total project cost for year	

10.5. Project totals – show total expected costs for the project in sterling.

Total project cost	
Total ESF support applied for is	
Total match funding available	
Overall intervention rate for the project is : (ESF as a total of project cost)	%

10.6 Cash flow forecast – provide a cash flow forecast using the form provided to demonstrate that your planned cash resources can meet project delivery plans.

Part 11: Public Match funding

Show the amount of match funding that you will provide and show which budgets or programmes will be used to provide match funding. Note that all match funding must support eligible activity in the Operational Programme.

Year	Budget or programme source	Amount - sterling

If other organisations are providing match funding for this project, set out the name of the organisations providing match funding and the amount. The match funding must be 'cash' not 'in-kind'. A separate match funding certificate for each match funder should be included with this application.

Year	Name and address of match funder	Amount - sterling

Part 12: Declaration

I believe that the organisation is eligible to manage an ESF part-funded project and I confirm that this organisation wishes to manage an ESF part-funded project for the 2007-2013 ESF England programme.

Signature

Name

Official Position

Date

When you have completed this form you should send it to the Managing Authority

Appendix 1: Basis for estimate of indirect costs

NOTE

Indirect costs are costs which cannot be attributed to an ESF project. Expenditure in relation to indirect costs will be reimbursed on a flat rate basis but to calculate the rate of payment you must first estimate your indirect costs.

Please explain in the table below, for each indirect cost you have identified, the basis of your estimate.

e.g. Gas

Estimated annual gas bill	£5500
Estimated training hours provided by your organisation	100,000
Estimated ESF training hours provided by your organisation	10,000
Percentage of ESF hours	10%
Estimated indirect costs for gas - 10% of yearly bill of £5,500 is £550	

Year	Indirect cost	Basis of estimating yearly cost
Total		

Insert more rows if required.

ANNEX 2 Appraisal criteria for non-CFO applications

Application item	Criteria
Part 3: Project Description and contribution to the regional ESF framework	
<p>3.2. Project description</p> <p>Gateway question</p>	<p>The call for proposals will have set the call within the context of the regional ESF framework and complementary activities set out in CFO plans.</p> <p>The main criterion here is to ensure that the proposed activity does fit the call for proposals and the regional ESF framework and does not duplicate activity that will be managed through co-financing.</p> <p>There should be evidence of working with the CFOs in partnership to ensure complementarity.</p> <p>There should also be evidence that planned ESF activity will complement ERDF activity.</p> <p>If the project plans to provide direct support to business the application should show how it will meet the requirements of the Business Support Simplification Programme.</p> <p>The project must give a breakdown against the costs of the planned number of participants, outcomes and results, which again should fit with the call for proposals.</p> <p>The key milestones should give an indication as to the viability and deliverability of the project.</p>
<p>3.3. Sub-contracting</p>	<p>If sub-contracting will not be used, then no rating should be given.</p> <p>If sub-contracting is to be used, it must be clear how sub-contractors will be selected in a transparent way; how their performance will be managed, and how value for money will be ensured.</p>
<p>3.4. Added value</p>	<p>Must indicate how ESF will bring added value to the project in terms of quantity (egg numbers supported; additional outcomes) and/or quality (egg additional support such as carer care; ESOL training).</p>
Part 4 State aids	
<p>4.1. Will any activity funded through this project be a State Aid?</p>	<p>The answer is likely to be “no”, and if so no rating should be given. The applicant should explain why activity will not be a State Aid.</p>
<p>4.2. State aids processes</p>	<p>If the answer to 4.1. is “yes”, there must be</p>

Application item	Criteria
	evidence that the applicant has the capacity to collect and collate the required information, and understands what the obligations on them are.
Part 5 Cross cutting themes	
5.1. Equal opportunities theme Gateway question	Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of equal opportunities and gender equality must be as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and be compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on this theme. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.
5.2. Sustainable development theme Gateway question	Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of sustainable development are as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on these themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.
Part 6 Capacity	
6.1. Management arrangements	The application should describe the arrangements in place to ensure how the project will be managed effectively.
6.2. People	There needs to be enough people with the right skills, knowledge base and abilities to cover the range of functions required.
6.3. Accounting systems	These must enable ESF and match funding expenditure to be separately identified and to meet audit trail requirements.
6.4. Monitoring & audit	There must be assurance that all the costs claimed will be eligible and that all aspects of project activity will be monitored against planned financial, output and results targets.
6.5. Management information.	Systems will be in place to collect participant level data (from sub-contractors if relevant), validate and collate and send it to the Managing Authority
6.6. Evaluation	This should set out how the contribution of delivering the project to the regional ESF framework and operational programme will be

Application item	Criteria
	subject to a qualitative evaluation.
6.7. Quality	As ESF funded provision will be subject to inspection by OFSTED, there must be systems in place to ensure quality standards and continuous improvement, and support to any sub-contractors to enable them to meet the standards.
6.8. Publicity	The application must show how the regulations will be met so that, amongst other requirements, all participants are made aware that the provision is part funded by the European Union.
Part 7 Financial viability	
7.1. Legal status	Gateway question when taken together Full information must be provided for all the questions, otherwise the risks of proceeding are likely to outweigh the benefits. Not a gateway question in the case of Gibraltar projects.
7.2. Audited accounts for last three years	
7.3. Auditor name and address	
7.4. How long in existence	
Part 8 Track record	
Details of previous ESF and other government funded projects	Evidence should be compiled in the form of, for example, accuracy and timeliness of claims; Article 4 visits and Article 10 visits, to assess previous performance of the applicant.
Part 9 Project expenditure details and Part 10 Financial summary	
Total project costs	Do the projected costs give value for money when set against the projected number and type of participants, outcomes and results? How well do the costs and associated targets relate to the broad costs and targets in the regional ESF framework.
Part 11 Public match funding	
Amount and source Gateway question	There must be evidence of the amount and source of clean cash match funding.
Part 12 Declaration	
Declaration	Must be signed and dated.

ANNEX 3 Appraisal report on a non-CFO application for grant

Region	Cornwall convergence	
	Merseyside phasing in	
	South Yorkshire phasing in	
	Gibraltar	

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – ENGLAND AND GIBRALTAR 2007-2013 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

Date and title of managing authority call for proposals	
Project name	
Name of organisation	
Date application form received	
Date of appraisal	
Appraised by	
Signatures	

Overall assessment & recommendation

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Assessment Scale

Excellent – consistently strong in all aspects of the criterion;

Good – consistently good in all aspects of the criterion. Minor weaknesses are capable of remedy and compensated for by strengths in some areas;

Acceptable - weaknesses are capable of remedy but need to be addressed prior to contract/offer letter or subject to specific conditions in offer letter;

Unacceptable – the information provided is insufficient to allow for an effective assessment to be made or assessor satisfied that criterion cannot be met.

Application form item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Part 3: Project Description and contribution to the regional ESF framework		
<p>3.2. Project description</p> <p>Gateway question</p>	<p>The call for proposals will have set the call within the context of the regional ESF framework and complementary activities set out in CFO plans.</p> <p>The main criterion here is to ensure that the proposed activity does fit the call for proposals and the regional ESF framework and does not duplicate activity that will be managed through co-financing.</p> <p>There should be evidence of working with the CFOs in partnership to ensure complementarity.</p> <p>There should also be evidence that activity will complement ERDF activity</p> <p>The project must give a breakdown against the costs of the planned number of participants, outcomes and results, which again should fit with the call for proposals.</p> <p>The key milestones should give an indication as to the viability and deliverability of the project.</p>	
<p>3.3. Sub-contracting</p>	<p>If sub-contracting will not be used, then no rating will be given.</p> <p>If sub-contracting is to be used, it must be clear how sub-contractors will be selected in a transparent way; how their performance will be managed, and how value for money will be ensured.</p>	
<p>3.4. Added value</p>	<p>Must indicate how ESF will bring added value to the project in terms of quantity (egg numbers supported; additional outcomes) and/or quality (egg additional support such as carer care; ESOL training).</p>	

Application form item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Part 4 State aids		
4.1. Will any activity funded through this project be a State Aid?	The answer is likely to be “no”, and should explain why. If so no rating should be given.	
4.2. State aids processes	If the answer to 4.1. is “yes”, there must be evidence that the applicant has the capacity to collect and collate the required information, and understands what the obligations on them are.	
Part 5 Cross cutting themes		
5.1. Equal opportunities theme Gateway question	Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of equal opportunities and gender equality must be as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on this themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.	
5.2. Sustainable development theme Gateway question	Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of sustainable development are as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on these themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.	
Part 6 Capacity		
6.1. Management	The application should describe the arrangements in place to ensure how the project will be	

Application form item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
arrangements	managed effectively.	
6.2. People	There needs to be enough people with the right skills, knowledge base and abilities to cover the range of functions required.	
6.3. Accounting systems	These must enable ESF and match funding expenditure to be separately identified and to meet audit trail requirements.	
6.4. Monitoring & audit	There must be assurance that all the costs claimed will be eligible and that all aspects of project activity will be monitored against planned financial, output and results targets.	
6.5. Management information.	Systems will be in place to collect participant level data (from sub-contractors if relevant), validate and collate and send it to the managing authority	
6.6. Evaluation	This should set out how the contribution of delivering the project to the regional ESF framework and operational programme will be subject to a qualitative evaluation.	
6.7. Quality	As ESF funded provision will be subject to inspection by OFSTED, there must be systems in place to ensure quality standards and continuous improvement, and support to any sub-contractors to enable them to meet the standards.	
6.8. Publicity	The application must show how the regulations will be met so that, amongst other requirements, all participants are made aware that the provision is part funded by the European Union.	
Part 7 Financial viability		
7.1. Legal status	Gateway question when taken together	

Application form item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
7.2. Audited accounts for last three years	Not for Gibraltar projects Full information must be provided for all the questions, otherwise the risks of proceeding are likely to outweigh the benefits.	
7.3. Auditor name and address		
7.4. How long in existence		
Part 8 Track record		
Details of previous ESF and other government funded projects	Evidence should be compiled in the form of, for example, accuracy and timeliness of claims; Article 4 visits and Article 10 visits, to assess previous performance of the applicant.	
Part 9 Project expenditure details and Part 10 Financial summary		
Total project costs	Do the projected costs give value for money when set against the projected number and type of participants, outcomes and results? How well do the costs and associated targets relate to the broad costs and targets in the regional ESF framework.	
Part 11 Public match funding		
Amount and source Gateway question	There must be evidence of the amount and source of clean cash match funding.	
Part 12 Declaration		
Declaration	Must be signed and dated.	

ANNEX 4 Application To Manage A Technical Assistance Project

Region	National
Priority	3

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – ENGLAND 2007-2013 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME APPLICATION TO MANAGE A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT PART FUNDED BY ESF

Please complete this form in full. Delete the explanatory notes in italics before submitting. You should refer to the ESF eligibility rules when completing this application. Contact ESF Division for electronic version of this form.

Part 1: Applicant Details

1.1. Name of Organisation	<input type="text"/>
1.2. Address	<input type="text"/>
1.3. Contact name and Position	<input type="text"/>
1.4. Telephone number	<input type="text"/>
1.5. Fax number	<input type="text"/>
1.6. Email	<input type="text"/>

Part 2: Project length

Please provide the start and end date of the project. The anticipated start date will be formally agreed with the ESF Division during the next stage of the process. The end date is the date that you anticipate activity will finish.

2.1. Start date	<input type="text"/>
2.2. End date	<input type="text"/>

Part 3: Project Description

3.1. Project Name	<input type="text"/>
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3.2. Give a detailed project description.

NOTES

*Describe the activities that your project will support in bullet point form, in no more than **500** words. The information should cover:*

- *The main outcomes of the project*
- *Explain how the project will contribute to the national Technical Assistance strategy.*
- *Which geographical areas are covered*
- *Support of the CFOs for your project*

-
-
-
-
-
-

3.3 Sub-contracting

Will any part of this project be sub-contracted to other organisations? If so, how will you select sub-contractors, manage their performance and ensure value for money?

Part 4: Cross cutting themes

4.1 How will the project comply with the principles of equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming?

4.2 How will the project comply with the principles of sustainable development including environmental sustainability?

Part 5: Capacity

You need to demonstrate that you have sufficient capacity to carry out the responsibilities of managing an ESF project. Please give evidence of capacity in terms of:-

5.1 Management arrangements

Detail the arrangements you will put in place to ensure that the project will be effectively managed.

5.2. **People** - the number and experience of staff working that will support the project.

NOTE

Detail how many staff will be involved in the management and delivery of the project and explain their roles and responsibilities. Demonstrate also that the staff who will be involved have the appropriate experience and skills.

5.3. **Accounting systems**

NOTE

Accounting systems need to be able to account for ESF funds separately and to identify match funding so that there is no double counting. The systems need to meet audit trail requirements described in Article 15 of Regulation 1828/2006. How will you ensure that all the expenditure you will claim is eligible?

5.4 Publicity

NOTE

Publicity requirements are detailed in Article 8 of regulation 1828/2006. Describe how you will ensure that activity supported by Technical Assistance will meet ESF publicity requirements.

Part 6 – Financial Viability

If your organisation is not a public body, you need to show that you are financially viable. (The definition of what is a public body is included in the form guidance). Please complete these boxes :-

6.1. What is your organisation's Legal Status

6.2 Please confirm that you have provided audited accounts for the last three years and could supply them on request.

6.3 Provide details of your auditor's name and address

6.4 How long has your organisation been in existence?

Part 7 – Track Record

NOTE

If you received ESF Technical Assistance support during the 2000-2006 Programmes give details and include your most recent dossier number. Briefly explain how the ESF funding was used and what the project achieved. Please also explain any other government funded projects that your organisation has managed during the same period.

Part 8 – Breakdown of costs provided

An Excel spreadsheet will be provided

Part 9 - Financial summary provided

An Excel spreadsheet will be provided

Part 10 – Project totals provided

An Excel spreadsheet will be provided

Part 11 - Public match funding

Show the amount of match funding that you will provide and show which budgets or programmes will be used to provide match funding. Note that all match funded activity must support eligible activity in the Operational Programme.

Year	Budget or programme source	Amount

If other organisations are providing match funding for this project, set out the name of the organisations providing match funding and the amount. The match funding must be 'cash' not 'in-kind'. A separate match funding certificate for each match funder should be included with this application.

Year	Name and address of match funder	Amount
	N/A	N/A

Part 11: Declaration

I believe that the organisation is eligible to manage an ESF part-funded project and I confirm that this organisation wishes to manage an ESF part-funded project for the 2007-2013 ESF England programme.

Name

Official Position

Date

When you have completed this form you should send it to the Managing Authority in ESF Division.

Appendix 1

NOTE

Indirect costs are cost which cannot be attributed directly to an ESF project. Expenditure relating to indirect costs will be reimbursed on a flat rate basis but to calculate the rate of payment you must first estimate your indirect costs.

Please explain in table below, for each indirect cost you have identified, the basis of how your estimate is made.

e.g Gas

Estimated annual gas bill - £5,500

Estimated annual training hours by your organisation - 100,000

Estimated annual ESF training hours by your organisation - 10,000

Percentage of ESF hours - 10%

Estimated indirect costs for gas - 10% of yearly bill of £5,500 is £550

Indirect cost basis for estimate

Year	Indirect cost	Basis of estimating yearly cost

ANNEX 5 EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – ENGLAND 2007-2013
OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

Appraisal criteria for Technical Assistance applications

Application item	Criteria
Part 3: Project Description	
3.2. Project description Gateway question	<p>The project must fall within the scope of the national Technical Assistance strategy.</p> <p>It must be clear what the purpose and objectives of the project are, with clearly stated outcomes.</p> <p>The key milestones should give an indication as to the viability and deliverability of the project.</p> <p>There must be evidence that some or all of the CFOs in the area support the project.</p>
3.3. Sub-contracting	<p>If sub-contracting will not be used, then no rating should be given.</p> <p>If sub-contracting is to be used, it must be clear how sub-contractors will be selected in a transparent way; how their performance will be managed, and how value for money will be ensured.</p>
Part 4 Cross cutting themes	
4.1. Equal opportunities theme Gateway question	<p>Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of equal opportunities and gender equality must be as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and be compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on this theme. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.</p>
4.2. Sustainable development theme Gateway question	<p>Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of sustainable development are as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on these themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.</p>

Application item	Criteria
Part 5 Capacity	
5.1 Management arrangements	The application must demonstrate that the project will be efficiently managed.
5.2. People	There needs to be enough people with the right skills, knowledge base and abilities to cover the range of functions required.
5.3. Accounting systems	These must enable ESF and match funding expenditure to be separately identified and to meet audit trail requirements.
5.4. Publicity	The application must show how the regulations will be met so that, amongst other requirements, all documentation makes clear that the activity is part funded by the European Union.
Part 6 Financial viability	
6.1. Legal status	Gateway question when taken together Full information must be provided for all the questions, otherwise the risks of proceeding are likely to outweigh the benefits. Not a gateway question in the case of Gibraltar projects.
6.2. Audited accounts for last three years	
6.3. Auditor name and address	
6.4. How long in existence	
Part 7 Track record	
Details of previous ESF and other government funded projects	Evidence should be compiled in the form of, for example, accuracy and timeliness of claims; Article 4 visits and Article 10 visits, to assess previous performance of the applicant.
Part 8 Project expenditure details and Part 9 Financial summary	
Total project costs	Do the projected costs appear reasonable when set against the projected activities and outcomes
Part 10 Public match funding	
Amount and source Gateway question	There must be evidence of the amount and source of clean cash match funding.
Part 11 Declaration	
Declaration	Must be signed and dated.

ANNEX 6 EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – ENGLAND & GIBRALTAR OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME
2007-2013

Appraisal report on an application for Technical Assistance funding

National	Yes/No
Region or cross-regional	
Priority	3

Project name	
Name of organisation	
Date application received	
Date of appraisal	
Appraised by	
Signatures	

Overall assessment & recommendation to Programme Monitoring Committee

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Assessment Scale

Excellent – consistently strong in all aspects of the criterion;

Good – consistently good in all aspects of the criterion. Minor weaknesses are capable of remedy and compensated for by strengths in some areas;

Acceptable - weaknesses are capable of remedy but need to be addressed prior to contract/offer letter or subject to specific conditions in offer letter;

Unacceptable – the information provided is insufficient to allow for an effective assessment to be made or assessor satisfied that criterion cannot be met.

Application item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Part 3: Project Description		
3.2 Grant eligibility Gateway question	1. Is the applicant a public body? (If the applicant is a public body (government department or agency, local authority or non-departmental public body), then the project is a grant and is eligible. If the applicant is a non-public body, they must specify who the beneficiary of the project will be).	1. 2.

Application item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
	<p>2. Has DWP Commercial been consulted on applications from non public bodies?</p> <p>3. Has the applicant approached ESFD with a specific proposal for funding?</p> <p>4. Is the proposed project unique?</p> <p>5. Has ESFD issued any sort of specification for this project?</p> <p>6. Is the proposed project 'price based'?</p> <p>(that is can the outputs be specified and a cost attached to unit outcomes).</p>	<p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p>

Application item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Competition issue	<p>7. Does DWP/ESFD derive any direct benefit from the outcomes of the proposed activity? (consideration issue raised by commercial).</p> <p>8. Should the grant agreement be awarded competitively allowing other external organisations to submit proposals?</p>	
<p>3.3. Project description</p> <p>Gateway question</p>	<p>The project must fall within the scope of the national Technical Assistance strategy.</p> <p>It must be clear what the purpose and objectives of the project are, with clearly stated outcomes.</p> <p>The key milestones should give an indication as to the viability and deliverability of the project.</p> <p>There must be evidence that some or all of the CFOs in the area support the project.</p>	
3.4. Sub-contracting	<p>If sub-contracting is to be used, it must be clear how sub-contractors will be selected in a transparent way; how their performance will be managed, and how value for money will be ensured.</p>	

Application item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Part 4 Cross cutting themes		
4.1. Equal opportunities theme Gateway question	Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of equal opportunities and gender equality must be as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on this themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.	
4.2. Sustainable development theme Gateway question	Proposals for implementation and mainstreaming the theme of sustainable development are as required by EU regulations, and as set out in the Operational Programme and regional ESF frameworks, and compliant with UK legislation (or Gibraltar legislation in the case of Gibraltar projects) on these themes. The proposal must describe how this theme will be embedded across the whole of the project, including any activities delivered by sub-contractors.	

Application item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Part 5 Capacity		
5.1 Management arrangements	The application must demonstrate that the project will be effectively managed.	
5.2. People	There needs to be enough people with the right skills, knowledge base and abilities to cover the range of functions required.	
5.3. Accounting systems	These must enable ESF and match funding expenditure to be separately identified and to meet audit trail requirements.	
5.4. Publicity	The application must show how the regulations will be met so that, amongst other requirements, any documentation makes clear that the activity is part funded by the European Union.	
Part 6 Financial viability		
6.1. Legal status	Gateway question when taken together Not for Gibraltar projects Full information must be provided for all the questions, otherwise the risks of proceeding are likely to outweigh the benefits.	
6.2. Audited accounts for last three years		
6.3. Auditor name and address		
6.4. How long in existence		

Application item	Criteria	Assessment and comments
Part 7 Track record		
Details of previous ESF and other government funded projects	Evidence should be compiled in the form of, for example, accuracy and timeliness of claims; Article 4 visits; Article 10 visits; Article 13 and 16 visits, to assess previous performance of the applicant	
Part 8 Project expenditure details and Part 9 Financial summary		
Total project costs and value for money	Do the projected costs appear reasonable when set against the projected activities and outcomes, i.e. does the project represent acceptable value for money?	
Part 10 Public match funding		
Amount and source Gateway question	There must be evidence of the amount and source of clean cash match funding.	
Part 11 Declaration		
Declaration	Must be signed and dated.	

ANNEX 7 Public Match Funding Certificate

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND- ENGLAND 2007-2013 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME PUBLIC MATCH FUNDING CERTIFICATE

Contact ESF Division for electronic version of this form.

Part 1: Non-CFO Details

1.1. Name of Applicant Organisation	<input type="text"/>
1.2 Project Name	<input type="text"/>
1.3 Name of Public Match Funding Organisation	<input type="text"/>
1.4 Type of Public Match Funding Organisation	Either central government body, local authority, charitable trust, Community Interest Companies or other central or local government part-funded body.
1.4. Address of Public Match Funding Organisation	<input type="text"/>
1.5. Post Code	<input type="text"/>
1.6. Name of Contact at Public Match Funding Organisation	<input type="text"/>
1.7. Contact Telephone number	<input type="text"/>
1.8. Contact Email address	<input type="text"/>

Part 2: Additional Public Match Funding Organisation details

2.1 If organisation is a charitable trust or Community Interest Company, record the registered charity or CIC number.

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2.2. If organisation receives over 50% of its income from central or local government.

Yes/No
0%

Give percentage proportion of income from central or local government.

State name of main contributor

Part 3: Match funding details

Detail the amount of match funding that you will be providing for this project per year. (This must be cash match funding not in-kind match funding).

	Source	Amount

Part 4: Monitoring responsibilities of public match funder

4.1. Has your organisation agreed to take on monitoring responsibilities?	Yes/No
4.2 If not, name the organisation that has agreed to take responsibility	

Part 5: Declaration

- I confirm that my organisation is eligible to act as a Public Match Funder as set out in the Guidance.
- My organisation is able to provide the full amount of match funding for the project.
- I confirm that this amount does not include any funds (egg from Government programmes such as New Deal) that have already been used to match other EU funding.
- I will immediately inform the applicant and the Managing Authority of any changes to the above funding provision.
- I confirm that the details on this form are correct.

Name

Official Position

Signature

Date

ANNEX 8 Core Participant MI Requirement

CORE PARTICIPANT MI REQUIREMENT (ESF and MATCH)

Identification data

- Priority Project Number
- Transfer Date

NOTE: Characteristics such as Region, Objective and Priority can be derived from the above project number.

Individual participant details

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
All starters		
Gender	Male/Female	The gender of the participant
Age	Date of Birth	The full date of birth of the participant
Identifier	Participant identifier	The unique number by which the CFO identifies an individual participant. May be required for follow up surveys. ¹
Location	Postcode	The full postcode of the address that the participant resides at
Participation	Start date	The date that the participant started on the ESF project. ²
Status ³	Employed	Participants who are in paid employment on the day they commence an ESF project. The participant must work 8 hours or more per week. This includes :

¹ For DWP, this is the 12 digit numeric client reference no. For LSC, this is the provider code followed by the client number.

² A MI participant record is required for each participation in the programme by an individual.

³ The values for 'status' are mutually exclusive i.e. a participant can only belong to one of these categories not more than one.

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees (people who work for a company and have their National Insurance paid directly from their wages) and • Self-employed (people who work for themselves and generally pay their National Insurance themselves).
	Unemployed	Participants who are without a job and available to start work and looking for work, or waiting to start a job that has already been obtained, as at the date they started on the ESF project.
	Economically inactive	Participants who are not employed, but who do not satisfy the ILO criteria for unemployment... This is because they are either not seeking work or are unavailable to start work.
	Full time education or training	<p>A participant who satisfies one of the following criteria but is not a 14-19 NEET:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time education either in a school, A FE Institution or a HE institution • In full-time Work-based learning (including apprenticeships, Entry to Employment and NVQ learning) <p>Other education or training (including independent colleges or training centres or receiving training or part-time education but not currently employed)</p>
	14 -19 NEET	<p>Participants aged 14-19 who on joining an ESF project who are not in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time education either in a school, A FE Institution or a HE institution or • Work-based learning (including apprenticeships, Entry to Employment and NVQ learning or • Other education or training (including independent colleges or training centres or receiving training or part-time education but not currently employed) or • Employment <p>And</p> <p>Participants aged 14 and 15 who are at risk of becoming NEET when they leave school, for example those identified by the Connexions Service as needing 'support' or 'intensive support'.⁴</p>
If unemployed	Length of unemployment on starting	Only for those whose status is Unemployed. Set to zero for participants who are not unemployed.

⁴ Young people in part-time learning (less than 16 hours) are included in 'full-time education and training' and are not counted as NEET.

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
	< 6 months 6 – 11 months 12 – 23 months 24 – 35 months 36 + months	Information on length of unemployment to be provided using bandings provided (i.e. less than six months; 6-11 months etc).
Ethnicity ⁵	<p>White 1) British 2) Irish 3) Other</p> <p>Mixed 4) White and Black Caribbean 5) White and Black African 6) White and Asian 7) Other mixed background</p> <p>Asian or Asian British 8) Indian 9) Pakistani 10) Bangladeshi 11) Other Asian background</p> <p>Black or Black British 12) Caribbean 13) African 14) Other Black background</p> <p>Chinese or other ethnic group 15) Chinese 16) Any other ethnic group</p> <p>Prefer not to say 17) Not stated</p>	
Disability	Disabled/with health conditions (Yes/No)	Participants who on joining an ESF project report having a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-limiting disability or learning difficulty (which includes long term health

⁵ One only of the 17 ethnicity options to be used for each participant.

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
		<p>problems); or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A current disability covered by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). <p>A 'work-limiting disability' is a long-term health problem disability or learning difficulty that affects the amount or type of work a person can do.</p> <p>The DDA defines disability as a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. To count as disabling under this definition an impairment must be physical or mental, have a substantial adverse effect on day to day activities and be long-term.</p> <p>When this variable is set to 'yes' this indicates that the participant has either indicated that they have a disability or suffer from a health condition or have a disability and also suffer from a health condition.</p> <p>When set to 'no' this indicates that a participant has indicated that they do not have a disability and do not suffer from a health condition</p>
Highest level of qualification held ⁶	None	Participants who do not have a QCA defined relevant qualification at any level.
	Below Level 1	Participants who on starting ESF do not have a relevant full qualification at level 1 or above (as defined in the QCA National Qualifications Framework).
	Level 1 or equivalent	Participants who on starting ESF have a relevant full qualification at level 1 or the equivalent
	Level 2 or equivalent	Participants who on starting ESF have a relevant full qualification at level 2 or the equivalent
	Level 3 or equivalent	Participants who on starting ESF have a relevant full qualification at level 3 or the equivalent
	Level 4 or equivalent	Participants who on starting ESF have a relevant full qualification at level 4 or the equivalent
	Level 5 or higher or equivalent	Participants who on starting ESF have a relevant full qualification at level 5 or the equivalent
	Not known	This value indicates that it is not known which relevant qualifications the participant

⁶ These values are mutually exclusive i.e. it is only the highest level relevant qualification for a participant that is recorded.

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
		does or does not hold. (N.B 'Relevant' means a qualification relevant to the sector in which a participant is working or seeking to work. For example, a participant may have academic qualifications at level 2 but these may not be relevant to the sector or occupation. Or a participant may have a level 2 vocational qualification which relates to an old or declining industry, and is not relevant to their current sector or organisation).
Priority 1 and Priority 4 leavers		
Date of leaving	End date	The date that the participant left the ESF project
Leaving status ⁷	Employed	Participants who are in employment within 13 weeks of leaving an ESF project in a job that lasts for 8 hours or more per week. This includes employees and self-employed people.
	Unemployed	Participants who on leaving the ESF project are unemployed.
	Economically inactive	Participants who on leaving the ESF project are economically inactive
	Into education or training	Participants who on leaving the ESF project are in education or training
	14 – 19 NEET	Participants who are classified as '14-19 NEET' on leaving the ESF project
Qualifications gained ⁸	Gained no qualification	Participants who did not acquire any relevant new qualifications after participating in the ESF project
	Gained basics skills qualifications	A participant who gained a Skills for Life entry level, level 1 or level 2 qualification in literacy or numeracy or language (e.g. ESOL) or ICT, as a result of the ESF project (even if the qualification is awarded after the participant has left the project).
	Gained Level 1	A participant who acquired a relevant level 1 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project.
	Gained Level 2	A participant who acquired a relevant level 2 qualification as a result of participating in

⁷ The values for 'leaving status' are mutually exclusive i.e. a participant can only belong to one category.

⁸ These values are not mutually exclusive. Any qualification that a participant has acquired must be recorded i.e. a participant may acquire one or more qualifications.

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
		the ESF project
	Gained Level 3	A participant who acquired a relevant level 3 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained Level 4	A participant who acquired a relevant level 4 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained Level 5 or higher	A participant who acquired a relevant level 5 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project.
Priority 2 and 5 leavers		
Date of leaving	End date	The date that the participant left the project
Leaving status	Into education or training (Yes/No)	Participants who on leaving the ESF project are in education or training
Qualifications gained ⁹	Gained no qualification	A participant, who did not acquire any relevant new qualifications after participating in the ESF project
	Gained basic skills qualifications	A participant who acquired a Skills for Life qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained Level 1	A participant who acquired a relevant level 1 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained units or modules of level 2 qualifications	A participant who gains at least one unit or module of a level 2 qualification, but not a full level 2 qualification as a result of participating in an ESF project
	Gained Level 2	A participant who acquired a relevant level 2 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained units or modules of level 3 qualifications	A participant who gains at least one unit or module of a level 3 qualification, but not a full level 3 qualification as a result of participating in an ESF project
	Gained Level 3	.A participant who acquired a relevant level 3 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project

⁹ These values are not mutually exclusive. Any qualification that a participant has acquired must be recorded i.e. a participant may acquire one or more qualifications.

Variable	Descriptors	Definition
	Gained units or modules of level 4 qualifications	A participant who gains at least one unit or module of a level 4 qualification, but not a full level 4 qualification as a result of participating in an ESF project.
	Gained Level 4	A participant who acquired a relevant level 4 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project
	Gained Level 5 or higher	A participant who acquired a relevant level 5 qualification as a result of participating in the ESF project.

ANNEX 9 [Annex deleted]

ANNEX 10 [Annex deleted]

ANNEX 11 [Annex deleted]

ANNEX 12 [Annex deleted]

ANNEX 13

Project type e.g. Technical Assistance	
Priority Number	

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – ENGLAND & GIBRALTAR 2007-2013 OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

Variation to Agreement Request.

Please complete this form if you are requesting a variation to your Agreement to an ESF project.

This should be forwarded to your ESFD Managing Authority contact electronically with a signed hard copy to follow, to: ESFD, Level 2, Rockingham House, Sheffield, S1 4ER.

Part 1: Applicant Details – complete 1.1 to 1.8 inclusive.

1.1. Agreement Number	<input type="text"/>
1.2. Name of Organisation	<input type="text"/>
1.3. Project Name	<input type="text"/>
1.4. Address	<input type="text"/>
1.5. Contact name and Position	<input type="text"/>
1.6. Telephone number	<input type="text"/>
1.7. Fax number	<input type="text"/>
1.8. Email	<input type="text"/>

1.9. Please provide a brief summary of the change/s required to the project and how this has come about.

Part 2 – Change to project description

2.1 Please provide details of the proposed changes to the ESF project:

You should include any changes to the following

Project description

Sub contractors

Added Value

State Aids

Cross Cutting Themes

Management Arrangements

People

Accounting Systems

Monitoring and Audit

Management Information

Evaluation

Quality

Publicity

Project costs

(inc no change to total but changes within years/cost headings)

Match funding

2.2 Please provide details of why the change is required.

Part 3: Participant Outputs and Results

3.1 Please explain why the change to project outputs and results is required and what the major differences are. e.g whether targets are higher or lower. Complete only those sections which are relevant to the project and the requested change/s to this. Complete Annex 1, 2, 4 or 5. These can be found in Manual 3 of the ESF Guidance.

Part 4: Annexes Required

Changes involving additional funding require a revised Finance Section. A proposed profile detailing the changes is also required.
For projects with participants a revised Outputs and Results table is required.

Part 5: Declaration

I confirm that the changes detailed in this form (and associated annexes) are necessary for the successful operation of this project.

This should be forwarded to your local ESFD contact electronically with a signed hard copy to follow.

Name:

Official Position:

Date:

A formal response to your request will be made once the details of the request have been considered.
Where changes are agreed, this will be done through a Variation to Agreement.

For official purposes only:-

I have noted the content of this request which will be taken forward for consideration

Signature

Name

Date

ANNEX 14 ESF Technical Assistance (TA): Revised Strategy Introduction

1. Papers MC/05/07, MC/06/11 and MC/07/11 chart the progress and development of Technical Assistance (TA) strategy throughout the 2007-13 programme. This strategy paper brings those documents together in order to summarise the changes to the ESF Technical Assistance strategy agreed by the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) in March 2011.

Background

2. The requirements for the use of TA by Member States are set out in Article 46 of Council Regulation 1083/2006.

3. The original England ESF TA strategy divided the competitiveness and employment objective TA budget evenly between national and regional activities. Half of the TA money available for regions was allocated whilst the rest was retained centrally for regions to bid against according to need.

4. Each region was assigned an indicative budget and developed a regional TA strategy to be considered by the regional ESF committees. Regional TA strategies took account of the priorities in the regional ESF frameworks and set out the arrangements for approving TA projects. Regional TA projects have to date been managed by the Managing Authority's regional teams in Government Offices supported by the Managing Authority central team in ESF Division.

5. The phasing in areas were assigned a ring fenced sum for the first half of the 2007 – 2013 ESF programme. A significant proportion of these funds were unspent and as a consequence moved by regional committees into Priorities 1 and 2 in the virement exercise agreed by the PMC in November 2009. £2.3m in total was also vired from the non phasing in regions in the same exercise.

6. The convergence area has a separate TA budget (Priority 6) and developed its own convergence TA strategy taking account of the needs of Cornwall and priorities in the convergence ESF framework. In addition, in the convergence area only, TA can also be used to invest in administrative capacity to facilitate programme delivery and strengthen capacity in impact analysis and evaluation.

Revised TA strategy

7. Technical Assistance will continue to be available to support the delivery of the rest of the ESF programme. As of April 2011, in total approximately £15m of ESF is uncommitted and is therefore available to support eligible TA activity for the remainder of the ESF programme. However, the TA strategy has been revised to reflect the institutional and policy changes brought about by the change of Government in 2010.

TA in the Competitiveness and employment objective

8. For the TA strategy covering the competitiveness and employment objective the following changes have been made:

- responsibility for managing existing TA projects has been transferred from the Managing Authority's regional teams in Government Offices to ESF Division;
- regional TA strategies have been discontinued and regional TA budgets

merged centrally and the funds managed by the Managing Authority;

- prospective applicants for TA will be directed by the ESF website to apply to the Managing Authority;
- the Managing Authority will continue to report annually to the PMC on TA progress and implementation but will provide enhanced information on local level activity.

9. Exceptions to the above will apply where ESF committees continue, that is, in London, where the Mayor has a statutory role relating to the employment and skills strategy, and Gibraltar. Existing procedures and arrangements for servicing TA activity will continue to apply.

TA in the Convergence area

10. The Convergence area will continue to operate with a separate TA budget and its own Convergence TA strategy taking account of the needs of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The Managing Authority will support the Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly ESF committee with the application and appraisal process.

Eligibility for TA support

11. The Managing Authority will use existing guidance on the ESF website and the requirements set out in the England ESF Operational Programme (OP) to assess the suitability of TA applications.

12. The OP sets out the eligibility of TA funding to support the management and implementation of the programme. In particular, TA can be used to finance preparatory, management, monitoring, evaluation, information (including publicity), control activities, support for cross-cutting themes of equal opportunities and sustainable development, and activities to reinforce the administrative capacity. TA can also support partners in the non-governmental sector to participate in and deliver the programme.

13. In summary, eligible applications must:

- be for activity that supports the delivery of the mainstream ESF programme;
- have the support of those bodies delivering the ESF programme, normally the main co-financing organisations; and
- have match funds committed to cover the full duration of the project.

14. Applications covering activity for one or more former regions or for the whole of England are eligible for funding.

15. [Paragraph deleted]

16. See Manual 1, section 1.11 for further information on eligibility.