

## **European Update 9th April 2018, from Network for Europe Cheshire, Cumbria, G Manchester, Lancashire, Liverpool CR**

### **Headlines**

ERDF and ESF calls in March, more ESF imminent

YEI-ESF

ESF loan funds

National Third Sector Representation

List of North West ERDF calls

### **Calls**

The ESF and ERDF programmes will run their full course (ie for the next five years - to 2023), as in the joint agreement published on 8th December (by the EU and UK negotiating teams). This has been reconfirmed by the Draft Agreement on the withdrawal, published on 19th March 2018 (page 82, Article 131 -green)

*Union law applicable after 31 December 2020 in relation to the United Kingdom's participation in the implementation of the Union programmes and activities committed under the MFF 2014-2020 or previous financial perspectives.*

*1. In respect of the implementation of the Union programmes and activities committed under the MFF 2014-2020 or previous financial perspectives, applicable Union law, including the rules on financial corrections and on clearance of accounts, shall continue to apply with regard to the United Kingdom after 31 December 2020 until the closure of those Union programmes and activities.*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-withdrawal-agreement-19-march-2018>

ERDF calls were all on 2nd March, with a deadline generally of 20th April (including ERDF and ESF Technical Assistance). Future calls are expected in October 2018 and March 2019.

ESF does not go for ERDF's Big Bang, but will take place over the next few months, including calls for LEP areas in the North West. The first ESF calls were two (for Leeds) on 26th March.

### **YEI-ESF Youth Employment Initiative**

This is only available in Liverpool City Region in the North West.

Some confusion. At the Growth Board-PMC in December, the European Commission and the Managing Authority (DWP) confirmed that instead of finishing at the end of July 2018, funding could continue. Then at the GB-PMC on 21st March, the European Commission explained that this was no longer possible. We followed this up, and understand that DWP and the EC have had further discussions, which means that it will indeed be possible to extend the funding. Further clarification is expected.

### **Revisions to the ERDF Operational Programme**

Following the Mid Term Reviews, these changes have now been agreed by the European Commission. There was a paper in March which suggested there might be a further set of revisions. ERDF has some issues with commitment and spend - it will be challenging to reach all the targets.

### **EClaims**

This is the web-based system for the 2014-20 English Programme. EClaims is now in place for all ESF claims and some ERDF claims, and should be used for bids at some point in the future. DWP in particular have been focussing on getting all the data onto the system, and making sure it is accurate and up to date. This will finally lead to timely, correct, and specific Management Information, and less work for the Managing Authorities, and is most welcome. Currently, it relies on Jaspersoft to actually extract the data, so there could be a gap until this information is available.

## **ESF Financial Instruments**

FI-Compass held a meeting on Financial Instruments for ESF, on 8th and 9th March. Opened by the Commissioner, and two MEPs, this looked at how loans can be financed by ESF. Although many people think ESF is purely for training and qualifications, it covers lifelong learning, the relief of poverty, and tackling inclusion.

Over 200 attendees (a few from the UK) heard a variety of presentations about the use of loans, guarantees and other support in the previous and current programmes. One Italian example was a loan fund for households (fridges, transport, education etc) for those in poverty. There were many examples of support for social enterprises and startups, including microcredit (loans up to €25k) and guarantees. Accompanying the expansion in social enterprise across Europe, ESF is being used in a variety of ways, including low interest loans, and wrap around support.

More details on the website (including many reports and presentations), although it is not the easiest to navigate.

[https://www.fi-compass.eu/sites/default/files/publications/ESF\\_The\\_european\\_social\\_fund\\_EN.pdf](https://www.fi-compass.eu/sites/default/files/publications/ESF_The_european_social_fund_EN.pdf)  
[www.fi-compass.eu](http://www.fi-compass.eu)

## **Simplification**

The latest meeting of the Thematic Network on Simplification took place in March. This group includes representatives from ESF Managing Authorities from 26 of the 28 Member States, as well as from the European Commission, and others (including NGOs).

There was disappointment that the latest proposed delegated acts on standard costs for training would not be easy to implement in the current programme (as a result of insufficient data). There was considerable discussion on draft budgets, involving auditors, and practical examples of simplification.

## **BBO - Gold Plating**

Network for Europe has been concerned for some time about Gold Plating - the unnecessary extra work for everyone that has built up in the European Programmes. We have been involved with the work of the European Commission on the Simplification Agenda, and welcome what has already been achieved by the Managing Authority.

Now that CSI is underway, it will be working in partnership with the Big Lottery Fund, ESF Managing Authority, and BBO Beneficiaries to see what can be done in partnership to simplify the process of operating BBO. In particular around proof of eligibility of participants, and of expenditure. A meeting is planned in May.

## **National ESF Representation for the Third Sector - CSI**

CSI - the Civil Society Involvement project is now up and running. This is operated by The Women's Organisation, with support from WEA and CABx, and is part funded by ESF Technical Assistance. It follows on from similar projects in previous programmes.

The project will support third sector representation on the Growth Board-Programme Monitoring Committee and on the other national sub-committees. As agreed at the start of the Programme, the current reps are standing down, and there is a process to appoint representatives.

<https://thewomensorganisation.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f9eae6be189b4cea54c288d9f&id=f326f2b227&e=34d43e5d0b>

It will produce timely information of interest to the third sector, including updates on the various sub-committees, and the opportunity to feed in comments to the representatives.

Sign up for email updates -

<https://mailchi.mp/cc062cf204fb/civil-society-involvement-is-launching-2107461>

## UK Shared Prosperity Fund

This is the general name for what will replace ESF, ERDF etc after the 2014-20 Programme. It is not clear what it will be (each group - Local Authorities, Private Sector, LEPs, Universities, Third Sector see it from their point of view), nor how centrally run or devolved it could be. Currently, there is likely to be a consultation, expected in early Autumn.

## ESF Project Bulletin

The March update is available (the seventh). It reports on projects in Plymouth and Cornwall, as well as Work and Health in London. It also refers to Guidance Notes, including extensions for Technical Assistance.

Email [ESF.2014-2020@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ESF.2014-2020@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) and subscribe direct for your own copy of the Bulletin.

## ERDF Practitioner Network

The March Update has been sent out by MHCLG. This highlights projects in Cornwall, Manchester and the North East, refers to various guidance documents, and explains the timetable in 2018 (first N+3 targets, plus Performance Framework targets).

To subscribe to the updates, email [esif@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:esif@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

## ESIF Programme Bulletin

The April update is available early. It features information on ERDF/ESF/EAFRD calls and commitments, ESF Action Notes, EClaims and targets for ERDF.

Email [esif@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:esif@communities.gsi.gov.uk) and subscribe direct for your own copy of the Bulletin.

## List of ERDF calls in the North West.

As in our previous update, these were announced on 2nd March 2018, and all have deadlines of 20th April (note our error in that update where we included the Lancashire ICT funding within the SME heading). Each call has a list of expected outputs. Projects typically last three years, and generally have a minimum input of 500k ERDF. Value for money needs to be addressed, and the Cross Cutting Themes of Environmental Sustainability and of Equal Opportunities. There will need to be an explanation of how the project will work with the local growth hub. In some cases, the bid could be for an extension of an existing revenue project (where the financial completion date is within 18 months of the closing date), but bids from new organisations are equally welcomed. Full information is at the website below, from which each set of call details can be downloaded, together with the various application forms.

<https://www.gov.uk/european-structural-investment-funds>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-2014-to-2020-european-structural-and-investment-funds>

### Cheshire and Warrington

**£3m P1** Promoting Research and Innovation

**OC03R18P0708**

Minimum £500k from ERDF (ie min £1m per project)

Deadline 20/4/18

#### *Local Need*

Market gap in provision of science assets base. Core specialisms -

R&D in bio-tech, medical/health tech, ICT and related advanced materials/processes

R&D support to engineering industries (inc automotive supply chains)

R&D for chemicals, energy, advanced engineering, waste.

#### *Sub Priorities*

1a Enhancing research and innovation infrastructure, promoting centres of competence

1b Promoting business investment in research and innovation by -

links and synergies with R&D Centres and HE. In particular tech transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service, networking etc

supporting tech and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation etc

## **Greater Manchester**

**£3m P1** Promoting Research and Innovation  
Minimum £500k from ERDF (ie min £1m per project)  
Single project (consortia) preferred.

**OC15R18P0712**  
Deadline 20/4/18

### *Local Need*

Build on GM reputation for science and tech devpt (see Science and Innovation Audit). Support services that provide universal innovation advice, work cross all sectors, link with GM Universities, and growth nodes, improve innovation leadership, add value to/work with GM Growth Hub.

### *Sub Priority*

1b Promoting business investment in research and innovation by -  
links and synergies with R&D Centres and HE. In particular tech transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service, networking etc  
supporting tech and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation etc

## **Lancashire**

**£1.2m P1** Promoting Research and Innovation  
Minimum £500k from ERDF

**OC19R18P0715**  
Deadline 20/4/18

### *Local Need*

Align with Innovation Plan for Lancashire (30/1/18) and Strategic Aims.  
Address economic gap through innovation.

### *Sub Priority*

1b Promoting business investment in research and innovation by -  
links and synergies with R&D Centres and HE. In particular tech transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service, networking etc  
supporting tech and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation etc

## **Lancashire**

**£1.223m P2** Enhance access/use/quality of ICT  
Minimum £500k from ERDF

**OC19R18P0726**  
Deadline 20/4/18

### *Local Need*

Align with Boost, the local Growth Hub, focus on Lancashire's seven priority sectors.  
Increase the number of SMEs making productive use of digital technologies.

### *Sub Priority*

2b Developing ICT products and services, e-commerce, and enhance demand for ICT.

## **Cheshire and Warrington**

**£5m P3** Enhancing competitiveness of SMEs  
Minimum £500k from ERDF (ie min £1m per project)

**OC03R18P0751**  
Deadline 20/4/18

### *Local Need*

Increase awareness of Growth Hub. Up to £500k for Growth Hub services, up to £4,500m on business advisers.

Applicants invited to Stage 2 application will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the model for working with the Growth Hub and across projects.

### *Sub Priorities*

3a Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular facilitating economic exploitation of new ideas and creation of new firms, including business incubators. Increase entrepreneurship, particularly in areas with low levels of enterprise and amongst under-represented groups.

3c Supporting the creation and extension of advanced capacities for products/services/devpt.

3d Supporting capacity of SMEs to grow (regional, national, international), and innovation.

## **Cumbria**

**£1m P3** SMEs - start-ups  
Minimum £500k from ERDF

**OC07R18P0753**  
Deadline 20/4/18

### *Local Need*

Co-ordinated package of support to encourage new business start-ups. Applicants must demonstrate sound understanding of the local business & economic environment, and how the support package will be locally relevant, delivered, and support the aims of the Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan.

Detailed explanation of requirements in call.

### *Sub Priority*

3a Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular facilitating economic exploitation of new ideas and creation of new firms, including business incubators. Increase entrepreneurship, particularly in areas with low levels of enterprise and amongst under-represented groups.

## **Cumbria**

**£2m P3** SMEs - sustainable and growing  
Minimum £500k from ERDF

**OC07R18P0754**  
Deadline 20/4/18

### *Local Need*

Co-ordinated package of support for businesses to be more sustainable and grow. Applicants must demonstrate sound understanding of local business environment and support Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan. Detailed explanation of requirements in call.

### *Sub Priorities*

3c Supporting the creation and extension of advanced capacities for products/services/devpt.

3d Supporting capacity of SMEs to grow (regional, national, international), and innovation.

## **Greater Manchester**

**£11.150m P3** Competitive SMEs  
Minimum £500k from ERDF (ie min £1m per project)

**OC15R18P0757**  
Deadline 20/4/18

Three single projects (consortia) preferred.

### *Local Need*

Notional £4.5m for growth hub, £3.4m start-up support, £3.5m targeted support high value sectors. Micro-enterprises and sole traders significant part of the GM economy. Need continual investment in startup support, and to improve 5yr survival rate. Innovation. Integrate with single point of access Growth Hub, work locally with other provision, and existing growth nodes.

### *Sub Priorities*

3a Promoting entrepreneurship, new ideas, foster creation new firms, business incubators.

3c Supporting the creation and extension of advanced capacities for products/services/devpt.

3d Supporting capacity of SMEs to grow (regional, national, international), and innovation.

## **Lancashire**

**£7m P3** Enhancing competitiveness of SMEs  
Minimum £200k from ERDF for 3a, min £500k for 3b and 3c

**OC19R18P0759**  
Deadline 20/4/18

Revenue only

### *Local Need*

Support to increase productivity and competitiveness in new and existing businesses, bringing academic and industry together on the North's high value corridor. Focussing on the seven local priority growth areas. Closely align with Boost, the local Growth Hub.

### *Sub Priorities*

3a Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular facilitating economic exploitation of new ideas and creation of new firms, including business incubators. Increase entrepreneurship, particularly in areas with low levels of enterprise and amongst under-represented groups.

3c Supporting the creation and extension of advanced capacities for products/services/devpt .

3d Supporting capacity of SMEs to grow (regional, national, international), and innovation.

## **Liverpool CR**

**£13m P3** Enhancing competitiveness of SMEs

**OC22R18P0761**

Minimum £500k from ERDF

Deadline 20/4/18

Revenue only

*Local Need*

Increase GVA, grow business base and provide more employment opportunities for local people.

Link with local Growth Hub. See Regeneris study (8/1/18).

Detailed explanation of requirements in call.

*Sub Priorities*

3a Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular facilitating economic exploitation of new ideas and creation of new firms, including business incubators. Increase entrepreneurship, particularly in areas with low levels of enterprise and amongst under-represented groups.

3c Supporting the creation and extension of advanced capacities for products/services/devpt.

3d Supporting capacity of SMEs to grow (regional, national, international), and innovation.

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**Cheshire & Warrington, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Liverpool City Region**

**£3.165m P3** SMEs Manufacturing

**OC50R18P0774**

Minimum £500k from ERDF

Deadline 20/4/18

£0.500m Cheshire & Warrington

£0.215m Cumbria

£1.500m Greater Manchester

£0.700m Lancashire

£0.250m Liverpool City Region

*Local Need*

The call supports SME manufacturing (subject to sector eligibility) through enhancing/complementing existing support.

Detailed explanation of requirements in call, in particular in annex 2.

*Sub Priorities*

3c Supporting the creation and extension of advanced capacities for products/services/devpt .

3d Supporting capacity of SMEs to grow (regional, national, international), and innovation.

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**Cumbria, G Manchester, Lancashire**

**£1.84m P3** SMEs Access to Finance

**OC50R18P0775**

Minimum £500k from ERDF

Deadline 20/4/18

£500k Cumbria

£800k Greater Manchester

£540k Lancashire

*Local Need*

Detailed at annex 2.

*Sub Priorities*

3c Supporting the creation and extension of advanced capacities for products/services/devpt.

3d Supporting capacity of SMEs to grow (regional, national, international), and innovation.

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**Cheshire & Warrington, Cumbria, G Manchester, Lancashire, Liverpool CR (+ other areas)**

**£5.611m P3** SMEs International Trade

**OC50R18P0777**

Minimum £500k from ERDF

Deadline 20/4/18

£1.000m Cheshire & Warrington

£0.500m Cumbria

£1.211m Greater Manchester

£2.400m Lancashire

£0.500m Liverpool City Region

(Similar projects, totalling £22.6m ERDF cover 24 other LEP areas).

This is supported by the Department for International Trade, and is intended to extend and enhance their support for enterprises to export.

*Local Need*

Projects are expected to show how they link with their existing growth hub, and existing business support provision. Detailed information in Annex 2 of the call.

*Sub Priority*

3d Supporting capacity of SMEs to grow (regional, national, international), and innovation.

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**Cheshire and Warrington**

**£3m P4** Supporting shift to Low Carbon Economy **OC03R18P0735**

Minimum £500k from ERDF, min 250k for 4a micro generate Deadline 20/4/18

*Local Need*

Five key driver and ten constraints/market failures. Cheshire & Warrington LEP Energy Strategy to be launched on 12th April 2018. Detailed explanation of requirements in call.

*Sub Priorities*

4a Promoting production/distribution of energy from renewable resources.

4b Promoting energy efficiency/renewable energy use in enterprises.

4c Supporting energy efficiency/smart energy in public infrastructure, including public buildings and housing sector.

4e Promoting low carbon strategies, including sustainable multimodal travel, mitigation measures.

4f Promoting research and innovation in, and adoption of, low carbon technologies.

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**Greater Manchester**

**£2m P4** Shift to Low Carbon Economy **OC15R18P0739**

Minimum £500k from ERDF (ie min £1m per project) Deadline 20/4/18

Single project (consortia) preferred.

*Local Need*

In GM, cultivation of the low-carbon sector is a priority for economic, environmental, and climate reasons (see GM Strategy). Seizing the growth potential of a low carbon economy and increased resource efficiency. Identify opportunities within companies and support them to realise savings and increase resilience. Includes providing grants to companies. Deliver quantifiable CO2 reductions.

*Sub Priority*

4b Promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in enterprises.

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**Lancashire**

**£8.143m P4** Supporting shift to Low Carbon Economy **OC019R18P0741**

Minimum £500k from ERDF, min 250k for 4a micro generate Deadline 20/4/18

*Local Need*

Low Carbon Sector highly diverse. Ensure the right interventions are in place in Lancashire. Show links to Boost, the local Growth Hub.

*Sub Priorities*

4a Promoting production/distribution of energy from renewable resources.

4b Promoting energy efficiency/renewable energy use in enterprises.

4c Supporting energy efficiency/smart energy in public infrastructure, including public buildings and housing sector.

4e Promoting low carbon strategies, including sustainable multimodal travel, mitigation measures.

4f Promoting research and innovation in, and adoption of, low carbon technologies.

**Network for Europe**

[info@networkforeurope.eu](mailto:info@networkforeurope.eu)



**European Union**

European Structural  
and Investment Funds