

east midlands  
competitiveness programme  
european regional development fund



**Priority Axis 3: Technical Assistance  
'Programme Facilitation'  
December 2008**

**Prospectus**

**East Midlands  
ERDF Competitiveness  
Programme 2007-13**



# **EAST MIDLANDS 2007- 13 ERDF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE STRATEGY**

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## Document

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## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Overview and Context**

It is a requirement for the East Midlands 2007-13 ERDF Competitiveness Programme to set out a plan for Technical Assistance. This Strategy has been drawn up in line with Council Regulation 1083/2006 (Article 46), the Implementing Provisions (Section 8.8 of the Operational Programme), and builds on the best practice from the previous East Midlands Objective 2 ERDF Programme.

This Strategy will guide and set the framework for activity to support the implementation of the Operational Programme during the whole programming period, for which Technical Assistance resource is intended. The Strategy will be a living document, kept under review, and continually developed to ensure it remains fit for purpose. In accordance with Article 46 the amount allocated to Technical Assistance will not exceed 4% of the total amount allocated for the East Midlands Operational Programme.

The final version of this Strategy will be published on the East Midlands ERDF website ([www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk](http://www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk)) along with other Programme documentation.

## **SECTION 2: ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **2.1 Role of *emda***

As Programme Secretariat and on behalf of the PMC, *emda* will take the lead in implementing and managing this Strategy.

In addition, *emda* will be a beneficiary of Technical Assistance funding (see section 4) with these applications requiring approval from the PMC.

As with all ERDF-funded projects, *emda* will require an audit trail to support all declarations of expenditure submitted to the Certifying Authority for Technical Assistance and will appoint the ERDF Governance Manager within the Programme Secretariat as the primary contact for all matters relating to Technical Assistance.

### **2.2 Role of the PMC**

PMC members are responsible for the oversight and strategic management of Technical Assistance activity undertaken by the Programme. The PMC will endorse the Strategy and budget for Technical Assistance, be responsible for reviewing reports and updates against the delivery of the plan, and will be responsible for approving applications for Technical Assistance made by *emda*.

### **2.3 Role of Project Managers**

All projects in receipt of Technical Assistance will be subject to the same regulatory requirements that apply to any other ERDF-funded project. Project

managers will be responsible for the preparation of applications, grant claims and progress reports, and must maintain an audit trail to support all claims for expenditure. In addition, Technical Assistance projects will also need to meet ERDF Publicity requirements.

## **SECTION 3: AIMS and OBJECTIVES**

### **3.1 Aims and Objectives**

The overall aim of Technical Assistance is:

To support the implementation and monitoring process of the Operational Programme to achieve the overarching Strategic Programme Objective, *“to become a region of highly productive, innovative and sustainable businesses and support the most disadvantaged of our communities to realise their economic potential.”*

More specifically, Technical Assistance will help to:

- Support the efficient, accountable, and compliant management of the Programme;
- Maximise the quality of Programme implementation and its impact;
- Ensure improved monitoring and evaluation of the Programme; and
- Ensure improved information and publicity of the Programme.

### **3.2 Operation**

The EU Regulations allow eligible ERDF-related expenditure to be claimed from 1 January 2007. The East Midlands will seek to utilise this flexibility with regard to Technical Assistance funding related to Programme preparation and management.

Based on the experience of previous ERDF Programmes, the 2007-13 ERDF Competitiveness Programme will not seek voluntary contributions from partners to be used as match funding for Technical Assistance activity. Match funding will be provided by project applicants on a project by project basis.

### **3.3 Access**

Technical Assistance will be available to support the preparatory, management, monitoring, evaluation, information and control activities of the Operational Programme, together with activities to reinforce the administrative capacity for implementing the Fund. It is anticipated, therefore, that Technical Assistance will be accessed by *emda* and key delivery partners.

Information on the procedures for applying for, and claiming, Technical Assistance will be made available on the region's ERDF website ([www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk](http://www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk)) to ensure stakeholders have access to this information.

## **SECTION 4: ACTIVITY**

### **4.1 Eligible Costs**

Technical Assistance will be available for a wide range of activities that support the implementation of the East Midlands Operational Programme. Technical Assistance activity falls into two main categories: those actions associated with the core management and implementation of the Programme; and those linked to the facilitation of stakeholders' effective participation in the Programme.

Eligible activities therefore include the following:

- Development and management of the Operational Programme, including the development of IT solutions;
- Feasibility studies and evaluations;
- Project preparation, appraisal and selection;
- Publicity and Communications;
- Promoting cooperation, networking and best practice;
- Servicing the PMC;
- Core administrative support;
- Preparation of reports;
- Support for the Cross-Cutting Themes; and
- Monitoring and control activities.

### **4.2 Core Programme Management and Implementation**

The Implementing Provisions within the East Midlands Operational Programme outline the tasks that *emda* as the A59(2) designated body for the Programme is responsible for delivering. As part of the process of developing the 2007-13 ERDF Programmes it was agreed that the management of the Programmes would be transferred from Government Offices to the RDAs. This transfer took place on 1 October 2007.

As part of these transfer negotiations it was agreed with the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) that the RDAs would be able to call on Technical Assistance funding to support the management of the ERDF Programmes. This was subsequently agreed with the European Commission.

When developing processes and procedures to ensure compliant delivery and management of the Programme, due regard has been given to 'best practice' and lessons learnt from previous Programmes. The ERDF staffing structures and delivery processes within *emda* reflect this, with a key focus on ensuring compliance across all elements of the Programme from the outset.

It is therefore crucial to ensure that the first priority for Technical Assistance is to support the effective and compliant management and administration of the Programme. This will cover costs incurred by *emda* - staffing, publicity and communications, and general monitoring and evaluation activity. If large scale

evaluation or other activities are required, these will need to be subject to separate applications.

On this basis, a proportion of the Technical Assistance budget (see section 5) will be set aside to make provision for this requirement over the lifetime of the Programme. It is, of course, possible that management arrangements may alter through the course of the Programme and the approach to core management and implementation costs can be amended to reflect this, as appropriate.

Provision will therefore be made for the core management and implementation budget, with *emda* submitting applications on a three-yearly basis. This application will comprise a single project to cover the aspects detailed above and will be subject to PMC approval.

It is likely that the overall requirement for *emda*'s core Programme management and implementation costs for 2008-15 (plus the final quarter of 2007) will be in the order of £7m – this represents an annual average full year cost of approximately £850,000. *emda* will seek to reclaim up to 50% of these costs from Technical Assistance – this represents a total programme allocation of up to £3.5m ERDF (or £425,000 ERDF per annum). Further details and a full breakdown will be included in the application made to the PMC.

### **4.3 Programme Facilitation**

The management and delivery of the Programme is different to that of the previous ERDF Objective 2 Programme. It is likely, therefore, that partners' interaction with the Programme and any related Technical Assistance requirements, will also be different. It is proposed Technical Assistance in relation to Programme Facilitation focuses on:

- Securing the involvement and engagement of partners in delivering the Programme;
- Ensuring representation of partners in the Programme<sup>1</sup>;
- Capacity building in those partners or organisations that are new to ERDF; and
- Supporting the development of local ERDF investment plans (under Priority Axis 2), particularly where target areas may be working together across authority boundaries.

**Views are sought from partners in relation to other relevant areas of activity – being mindful of the list of eligible activities in section 4.1.**

It will be important to ensure that activity included in a Technical Assistance application is additional ERDF-related facilitation activity, and does not seek to displace funding for mainstream activity.

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<sup>1</sup> Post-script: This has been included within the Programme Facilitation strand at the recommendation of the Priority Axis 2 Sub-Group.

#### **4.4 Retrospection**

The Strategy has been developed in support of the principle of retrospection to 1 January 2007. Any costs incurred from this date within the above-mentioned eligible costs may be included within a retrospective claim for Technical Assistance to be agreed by the PMC.

It is anticipated that there will be two retrospective elements to *emda's* Technical Assistance approach: one related to costs associated with the transfer of ERDF into the agency (including Programme and systems preparation work) and one related to a retrospective element of the core programme management and implementation costs.

The retrospective project linked to the transfer relates to costs that have been incurred in the process of developing the delivery mechanisms and procedures for the Programme. Prior to the transfer of staff from GOEM to *emda* at the beginning of October 2007, substantial development work had to take place to ensure that *emda* would be in a position to implement the Programme when it was adopted by the European Commission.

The transfer project also mapped existing processes and procedures for both ERDF and Single Programme; from this, proposing and developing appropriate delivery structures, including processes and procedures, and ensuring that these meet CLG and European Commission rules and regulations. The development of staffing structures to support the delivery of the Programme also formed part of the project. Consideration has also been given to the IT requirements to develop appropriate IT systems to ensure compliant delivery and management of the Programme.

This project is likely to run from 1 January 2007 to 31 March 2008 with estimated defrayed costs totalling £230,000 – this would result in a retrospective claim for ERDF of £115,000.

The retrospective element of *emda's* core management and implementation project is likely to be in the order of £320,000 ERDF (but this will be included as part of the main project application outlined in 4.2).

## **SECTION 5: FUNDING ALLOCATION and INTERVENTION RATE**

### **5.1 East Midlands ERDF Allocation**

The East Midlands 2007-13 ERDF allocation is €268.5m (approx £188m) and the full Programme value, including match funding, is €537m (£376m). The East Midlands allocation has been split across three Priority Axes. The allocation for Technical Assistance, Priority Axis 3, is €10.7m ERDF (approx. £7.4m) that will be equally matched with public funding giving a total Technical Assistance budget of €21.5m (approx £14.8m). This is based on a currency conversion rate of 1.45 and is intended as an approximate guide only.

In accordance with Article 46 the amount allocated for Technical Assistance does not exceed 4% of the total amount allocated for the East Midlands Operational Programme. In general, the normal Operational Programme rate of intervention of 50% will apply.

## **5.2 Indicative Budget**

|  |              |   |
|--|--------------|---|
| Technical Assistance Budget                    | £7,400,000   |   |
| <i>emda</i> core management and implementation | (£3,500,000) | 2008 – 2015 (including the final quarter of 2007) |
| <i>emda</i> retrospective transfer project     | (£115,000)   | 1 Jan 07 – 31 March 08                            |
| Balance remaining for additional activities    | £3,785,000   |   |

As detailed above, formal applications covering the two *emda* projects highlighted in the table will be subject to approval by the PMC.

Please note that these figures are subject to exchange rate fluctuations.

## **5.3 Match Funding**

As a matter of best practice, co-financing of Technical Assistance will be secured prior to formal approval of an individual operation. In general, the normal Operational Programme rate of intervention of 50% will apply.

Where *emda* is the applicant for Technical Assistance, public match funding will be provided by *emda*. Where key delivery partners seek to access Technical Assistance, they will need to provide appropriate public match funding.

# **SECTION 6: MONITORING and REPORTING**

## **6.1 Monitoring**

As Programme Secretariat on behalf of the PMC, *emda* will have responsibility for monitoring and reviewing delivery against the implementation of this Strategy on a continual basis. In addition, monitoring appropriate Technical Assistance activity will also form part of the Programme's overall Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy.

## **6.2 Reporting**

The PMC will receive regular reports on Technical Assistance projects and activity (alongside other Programme-funded investments). This review and reporting will allow the PMC to determine if there are gaps in Programme implementation that Technical Assistance may be able to support.

The Programme's Annual Implementation Report (AIR), a progress report to the Commission on the implementation of the Operational Programme, will be

presented to the PMC for their consideration and endorsement before it is submitted to the Commission. The AIR will include a written update on implementation of the Technical Assistance Strategy and will include the following information:

- Progress on implementation of the Strategy;
- Detail on the items of Technical Assistance expenditure;
- The use made of Technical Assistance; and
- Any major amendments to the Strategy.

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## Introduction

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union by supporting regional economic development. The East Midlands is eligible for approximately £220m between 2007 and 2013, which when combined with match funding, provides a programme value of approximately £380m – a significant investment in the economic development of the region.

The East Midlands qualifies as a competitiveness and employment region under the EU's Cohesion Policy, which aims to meet the EU objective to become:

*“...the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social inclusion”.*

The East Midlands Operational Programme<sup>1</sup> (OP) sets out the region's strategy for delivering the funds. It is based on an analysis of the region's main challenges, needs, strengths and opportunities as set out in the socio-economic and SWOT analyses, and the policy frameworks and drivers set down in the European Commission's Community Strategic Guidelines and the UK's National Strategic Reference Framework. In addition, the Programme is both set within the framework of, and will contribute to the delivery of, the Regional Economic Strategy (RES).

The Programme seeks to add value by enhancing and extending RES commitments to the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas. The overall Strategic Programme Objective is:

*“To become a region of highly productive, innovative and sustainable businesses and support the most disadvantaged of our communities to realise their economic potential”.*

This will be achieved under three Programme Priorities:

- Increasing productivity through innovation;
- Improving resource efficiency in businesses and communities; and
- Increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities.

The Programme will be delivered through two main Priority Axes:

- Priority Axis 1 (PA1): Innovation and sustainable business practice; and
- Priority Axis 2 (PA2): Sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities.

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<sup>1</sup> The OP is available to download at: <http://www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk>

**Priority Axis 1** is concerned with increasing productivity through innovation and sustainable business practice. Resources will be thematically targeted to focus on increasing commercialisation of innovation in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in priority sectors and in businesses with high growth potential to create higher value added products and services, and will include support for SME engagement in Research and Development (R&D) for emerging and enabling technologies. It will also promote and support innovation to improve resource efficiency.

**Priority Axis 2** is concerned with increasing sustainable economic and enterprise activity in disadvantaged communities and will be spatially targeted to focus resources on the most disadvantaged areas whilst exploiting the potential linkages to adjacent areas of economic growth. The aim is to create new indigenous economic opportunities by building local capacity, resources and support; reviving local infrastructure and environments and stimulating and supporting enterprise and new market opportunities.

The Programme also benefits from a third **Priority Axis (PA3) for Technical Assistance**, aimed at supporting the implementation and monitoring of the Operational Programme to achieve the overarching Strategic Programme Objective, this Prospectus is concerned with Priority Axis 3. Further information regarding PA1, PA2 and their operation can be found on the East Midlands European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Competitiveness Programme website ([www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk](http://www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk)).

This *Prospectus* invites applications under PA3 from organisations that demonstrate they can contribute to the delivery of the Programme through eligible 'Programme Facilitation' activities under one or more of the key priority areas set out in the Programme's Technical Assistance (TA) Strategy. There will be some **£3.78m** of ERDF available for TA 'Programme Facilitation' activity for the life of the Programme. This Prospectus invites applicants to submit bids that could deliver activity up until the end of 2010.

This *Prospectus* is divided into a series of chapters which provide information on activities which can be funded by ERDF, the application and appraisal arrangements, and the technical eligibility requirements. The ERDF intervention rate for individual TA projects will not normally exceed **50%**.

ERDF programmes vary from region to region because the challenges and opportunities in each area differ. Therefore what might be prioritised for funding under a programme in another part of England may not be supported by the East Midlands ERDF Competitiveness Programme 2007 - 13, and vice-versa.

## **1. Arrangements for Managing the Programme**

The Department for Communities & Local Government (CLG) has overall responsibility for the ERDF 2007-13 Programme. In the East Midlands, responsibility for implementation of the Programme has been delegated to the East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) which has been designated an “intermediary body” for the purpose of managing the funds, and acts as Secretariat to the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC).

### **Programme Monitoring Committee**

The PMC is composed of key regional stakeholders and provides strategic direction to the Programme as well as ensuring the effectiveness and quality of Programme implementation. It is chaired by the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) and comprises members drawn from the public, private and third sector. It considers and approves Key Products and Programmes of Activity (identified via the Investment Framework), and monitors overall progress of the Programme.

### **Performance Management Group (PMG)**

The Performance Management Group will be established shortly to assist the PMC in monitoring the performance of the Programme; the achievement of targets, results and impacts; and to make recommendations for action (to the PMC).

### **Priority Axis Sub Groups**

Sub Groups for each of the two main Priority Axes have been established to provide expert support, advice and recommendations to both the PMC and the PMG. Their primary role is to identify and develop investment opportunities for the Programme (Key Products or Programmes of Activity) and recommend them to the PMC by inclusion in the Investment Framework. These sub-groups were involved in the development of the Programme’s PA3 Technical Assistance Strategy.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Members of the PMC are required to declare any interests via a formal register. *emda* will ensure there is clear functional separation between staff engaged in managing the Programme (the Secretariat) and any staff engaged in delivery or development of projects. Where *emda* is a beneficiary of ERDF additional arrangements will apply.

## 2. Introduction to Priority Axis 3

Priority Axis 3 seeks to support the implementation and monitoring of the Operational Programme to achieve the overarching Strategic Programme Objective. More specifically, Technical Assistance will help to:

- Support the efficient, accountable, and compliant management of the Programme;
- Maximise the quality of Programme implementation and its impact;
- Ensure improved monitoring and evaluation of the Programme; and
- Ensure improved information and publicity of the Programme.

It is a requirement for the East Midlands 2007-13 ERDF Competitiveness Programme to set out a plan for Technical Assistance. The TA Strategy has been drawn up in line with Council Regulation 1083/2006 (Article 46), the Implementing Provisions (Section 8.8 of the Operational Programme), and builds on the best practice from the 2000-06 East Midlands ERDF Programme.

The TA Strategy guides and sets the framework for activity to support the implementation of the Operational Programme during the whole programming period, for which Technical Assistance resource is intended. In accordance with Article 46 the amount allocated to TA will not exceed 4% of the total amount allocated for the East Midlands Operational Programme. The final version of the TA Strategy is published on the East Midlands ERDF website ([www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk](http://www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk)) along with other Programme documentation.

### Context and Rationale

Technical Assistance will be available for a wide range of activities that support the implementation of the East Midlands Operational Programme. As set out in the Strategy, TA activity falls into two main categories: those actions associated with the core management and implementation of the Programme; and those linked to the facilitation of stakeholders' effective participation in the Programme (referred to as 'Programme Facilitation').

As part of national discussions regarding the 2007-13 ERDF Programmes, it was agreed that the management of the Programmes would be transferred from Government Offices to the RDAs. This transfer took place on 1 October 2007. As part of these transfer negotiations it was agreed that RDAs would be able to call on Technical Assistance funding to support both transfer costs, and the ongoing management of the ERDF Programmes. This was subsequently agreed with the European Commission.

*emda* as European Programme Secretariat will therefore be responsible for preparing applications for TA to support the core management and implementation of the Programme that will include preparatory, management, monitoring, evaluation, information and control activities of the Operational Programme, together with activities to reinforce the administrative capacity for implementing the Fund. **This Prospectus is concerned therefore with actions to support ‘Programme Facilitation’ only.**

### **Governing Principles**

The operation of TA will be managed in accordance with UK National Eligibility Rules and the TA Strategy includes the following governing principles:

#### **Match funding**

As a matter of best practice, match funding to support any TA project must be secured prior to formal approval of an individual operation. In general, the normal Operational Programme rate of intervention of 50% will apply. The European Programme Secretariat will ensure the total amount allocated for TA is managed appropriately so that it does not exceed 4% of the total amount allocated for the East Midlands Operational Programme (in accordance with Article 46).

In accordance with the UK National Eligibility Rules, contributions in kind are not eligible for ERDF, except in cases where a clear valuation can be made and information can be provided that demonstrates the match funding represents actual costs to the applicant or its partners.

#### **Retrospective costs**

The TA Strategy has been developed in support of the principle of retrospection to 1 January 2007. Providing a suitable case can be made, costs incurred from this date that fall within the above-mentioned eligible costs may be included for consideration as part of an application for TA support. Any applications seeking support for retrospective costs will be determined by the Programme Secretariat on a case by case basis.

## **3. What is included in ‘Programme Facilitation’?**

In developing the TA Strategy the views of partners were sought on relevant areas of activity that should be supported under ‘Programme Facilitation’. It was agreed that ‘Programme Facilitation’ should focus on the following key priority areas:

- Securing the involvement and engagement of partners in delivering the Programme;
- Ensuring representation of partners in the Programme;
- Capacity building in those partners or organisations that are new to ERDF; and

- Supporting the development of local ERDF investment plans (under Priority Axis 2), particularly where target areas may be working together across authority boundaries.

This *Prospectus* invites expressions of interest from applicants that can develop and deliver one or more of the above-mentioned key priority areas through eligible activities (and at reasonable cost) **during the funding period 2007-10**. Applications from partnerships will be considered providing one organisation is able to be the lead body for contracting purposes.

Detailed below are some suggestions of the types of 'Programme Facilitation' activity that could be delivered to support implementation of each of the Programme's Priority Axes. These are examples only and should not be considered an exhaustive list. Applicants will be encouraged to clearly set out whether their project is targeted at one of the Priority Axes, or at supporting delivery of the Programme overall.

### **Priority Axis 1 (PA1) – Innovation and sustainable business practice**

Proposals for providing partner support to enable them to engage with the Programme will be encouraged. This could take the form of small advisory teams or a joint region-wide partnership tasked with bringing partners together to further inform the scope of Programme delivery and facilitate links with wider regional or thematic policy areas.

Other proposals may include actions to build the capacity of those partners or organisations that are new to ERDF to better prepare them to bid for ERDF, and to support project development activity to ensure ERDF regulatory requirements are 'designed in' to projects.

### **Priority Axis 2 (PA2) – Sustainable economic and enterprise support in disadvantaged communities**

TA may be required to support the agreed delivery arrangements already in place under PA2. For example, to further develop or enable the effective implementation of the local ERDF investment plans covering the Programme's 12 target Districts.

Other proposals to support delivery of PA2 will be required to complement and align with the agreed delivery arrangements. Such actions may include measures to facilitate the coordination of activity at a sub-regional level through local coordination schemes, or provide capacity building support for partners or organisations that are new to ERDF.

### **Cross-Cutting Themes and Linkages across the Structural Funds**

Applications to promote the Cross-Cutting Themes (CCTs) of environmental sustainability and equality of opportunity will be encouraged to support the successful

implementation of the CCTs. For example, proposals may include the provision of CCT advice and guidance on project design, implementation, awareness raising and knowledge sharing, or may include running a conference and seminar programme; developing case-study material; contributing to reviews; and resourcing reference groups in support of the PMC.

Proposals to support linkages across the Structural Funds and the Programme's Priority Axes will also be encouraged. This may include actions to establish and facilitate mechanisms for joint working across sub-regional partners to provide a coordinated approach to signpost opportunities to access Structural Funds to potential applicants, and refer them to the key management agencies.

## 4. What is not included?

### Publicity and Communications

All regional publicity and communications activity for the Programme will be supported under the 'Core management and implementation' category of TA, plus a range of sub-regional activity subject to funds being available in the regional publicity budget. Partners should contact the European Programme Secretariat to discuss any publicity and communications requirements at sub-regional level.

All publicity and communications activity undertaken at individual project level must be built into individual project budgets.

## 5. Who Can Apply?

ERDF grants can be awarded to public, private ('not for profit') and third sector organisations. Historically, many successful ERDF bids have tended to be co-ordinated by the public sector, notably local authorities and by non-profit distributing private organisations acting in the public interest (such as Further and Higher Education institutions).

Given the nature of the Programme and 'Programme Facilitation' activities it is anticipated that the majority of applications for TA support under this rolling programme will come from Local Authorities, Higher Education and Third Sector organisations and bodies concerned with Cross-Cutting Themes. This is by no means intended as an exhaustive list.

Applicant organisations must be legally constituted and be able to enter into a legally binding arrangement with *emda*. The applicant is the organisation that negotiates and

subsequently enters a funding agreement with *emda* (and therefore carries the liability for ensuring that the terms of the ERDF funding agreement are met). ERDF is not paid directly to profit-distributing private sector organisations or for an organisation's own benefit (although in many instances private sector organisations – particularly SMEs – are the final beneficiaries of support).

## 6. Core Selection Criteria

In order to be eligible for assistance through the East Midlands 2007-13 ERDF Programme, all projects must adhere to a set of core criteria that have been developed in response to the Operational Programme, the relevant EC Regulations and the National Eligibility Rules. All TA projects must therefore:

- Support delivery of the ERDF Technical Assistance Strategy;
- Form part of a Key Priority Area of Activity as set out in the Programme's Technical Assistance Strategy;
- As a general rule, be located within the programme area and demonstrate that the outcomes will be delivered in, and impact on, the programme area<sup>2</sup>;
- Identify expected outcomes and provide details of clear and attainable SMART<sup>3</sup> targets;
- Demonstrate an additional and sustainable benefit to the delivery of the Operational Programme through 'Programme Facilitation' activity;
- Demonstrate acceptable value for money in terms of outcomes and benefits returned on the investment;
- Have a sound funding package in place, identifying the recipient of the funds and the sources of match funding;
- Not duplicate existing activity (but could extend such activity) and must not be a substitute for existing or planned domestic expenditure;
- Undertake an options analysis to ensure their proposals are the best way of achieving the desired outcomes;
- Demonstrate full consideration of the cross cutting themes of Environmental Sustainability and Equalities at project design stage; and
- Demonstrate that they have fully considered procurement and state aid issues.

Further details regarding ERDF Eligibility Conditions can be found at Annex 1.

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<sup>2</sup> Exceptions to this rule may be considered provided (a) the project is situated in a NUTS III area adjacent to the programme area; and (b) the results and impacts will be delivered within the programme area; and (c) the PMC agrees the principles for the investment.

<sup>3</sup> SMART - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound.

## 7. Project Assessment Criteria and Process

In addition to the Core Selection Criteria detailed above, in order to ensure TA 'Programme Facilitation' activity results in a well-balanced portfolio of high quality projects yielding optimum return on investment, further assessment criteria/processes will be applied. These will ensure applicants have fully demonstrated how their proposals will support delivery of the East Midlands Operational Programme.

The process begins with the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) form (Annex 2) to the Programme Secretariat who will assess the proposals in accordance with the Programme's core selection criteria and the following additional qualitative assessment criteria:

- Contribution to delivery of the TA Strategy;
- Need and demand;
- Deliverability (including track record);
- Project costs and funding package;
- Projected contribution to the Programme's objectives and intended outcomes; and
- Cross-cutting themes.

The EOI Assessment Framework is provided at Annex 3. EOIs will be expected to achieve a minimum quality threshold score of **at least 39** in order to progress. Applicants whose EOIs have failed to achieve the minimum or 'cut off' score (if applicable) will be advised they have been unsuccessful. Those achieving or exceeding the appropriate score will be invited to submit a full application.

Full applications will be assessed against the following bespoke and additional qualitative criteria by the Programme Secretariat:

- **Contribution to Delivery of the TA Strategy** - including 'fit' within the agreed portfolio of 'Programme Facilitation' activity;
- **Contribution to the Effective Delivery of the ERDF Programme** – the applicant will need to clearly set out whether their project is targeted at one of the Priority Axes, or at supporting delivery of the Programme overall;
- **Additionality** - the applicant will need to clearly demonstrate the added value of the proposals and reasons why the proposal does not duplicate or displace other activity;
- **Need and Demand** – including reasons why the proposal does not displace existing activity
- **Quantifiable Outcomes** - including the number and type of networks and consortia that will be created/supported and a quantifiable measure of the effectiveness of the network/consortia (e.g. number of proposals brought

forward/approved, number of capacity building initiatives). These should be SMART;

- **Outcomes/Targets Justification** - the applicant will need to demonstrate how any proposed quantifiable SMART outcomes have been calculated;
- **Value for Money** - applicants will need to demonstrate that maximum benefit has been derived in terms of the funding requested;
- **Cost Justification** - the applicant will need to detail how project costs were calculated;
- **Quality of systems** - the applicant will need to clearly demonstrate that they have satisfactory management systems in place to ensure that the project (if funded) will comply with the rules and regulations that govern ERDF support;
- **Cross Cutting Themes** - the applicant will need to demonstrate how both the *Environmental Sustainability* and *Equalities* cross cutting themes have been included in their project proposals (guidance regarding integration of the cross cutting themes in both project design and delivery is given at Chapter 8); and
- **Exit Strategy** - applicants will need to demonstrate that they have fully considered what happens to their proposed project once ERDF funding has been exhausted.

Applications will also be subject to an independent appraisal by the *emda* Shared Resource Centre (SRC) in accordance with the Government's Office of Project Appraisal Training (OffPAT) Guidelines. This independent appraisal tests the consistency of the information provided by the applicant, checks the aims and objectives of each application (assessing whether alternative delivery options have been fully considered), and seeks to highlight any possible duplication or conflicts with other publicly funded initiatives or projects.

The appraisal process tests the project's assumptions, the indicative value for money, the rationale and the evidence provided by the applicant to indicate that there is a need and a demand for each proposition.

The SRC's role and function with regards ERDF appraisals has been agreed with CLG and the European Commission.

## 8. Sustainable Development and Cross Cutting Themes

The purpose of Cross Cutting Themes (CCTs) within the East Midlands Operational Programme (OP) is to ensure that *Equalities* and *Environmental Sustainability* underpin and inform all activity financed through the Programme. The aim is to integrate, or mainstream, the themes across all activities. Mainstreaming ensures that CCTs are considered at every stage of the life of a project, from its development, application and delivery, to how it is monitored and evaluated.

## Equalities

The OP states that the principal objective of the *Equalities* CCT is:

- *To reduce economic and social inequalities by ensuring that opportunities generated by the Programme are available to everyone (regardless of their Gender, Disability, Race, Age, Sexual Orientation or Religion/Belief).*

This CCT supports the aim of the Achieving Equality strand of the Regional Economic Strategy, which is:

*“To reduce economic inequalities and increase productivity by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the region’s sustainable economic growth”.*

Equality of opportunity is important for economic, legislative and moral reasons. Only by ensuring that everyone has equal access to opportunities will we achieve our goal of being a ‘flourishing region’. More specifically, equality of opportunity is critical to the success of the ERDF Programme. People from traditionally excluded groups make up a significant proportion of the region’s population and evidence shows that many experience barriers to social and economic inclusion. If exclusion continues to inhibit the prospects of these groups, economic opportunities will not be maximised and social cohesion threatened. The effective integration of *Equalities* into the Programme will assist more people and businesses to access the opportunities that the Programme offers and thereby improve not only their quality of life, but also the regional economy.

## Opportunity for Priority Axis 3 Integration

Priority Axis 3 provides significant opportunities for funding specific activities that promote equality of opportunity, either directly or indirectly. However, all OP projects or Activity will also be required to demonstrate alignment with the principles of equality of opportunity as a CCT.

Specifically, all projects should:

- Ensure the needs of **all** potential beneficiaries are considered at project design stage in order that the service is appropriately delivered;
- Ensure that community consultation is undertaken to ensure that the proposed project is designed to meet the needs of all;
- Ensure all communication mechanisms are accessible for all i.e. events, websites, promotional materials; and
- Ensure all physical regeneration i.e. new buildings and upgrading existing premises is subject to Inclusive Design Principles.

## Environmental Sustainability

The OP states that the objective of the *Environmental Sustainability* CCT is:

- *To minimise environmental and resource impact, respect environmental capacities, and maximise the potential for the environment as an economic driver.*

The effective integration of *Environmental Sustainability* into the Programme can help deliver a more competitive, dynamic and innovative regional economy by embracing and responding to the economic opportunities that environmental integration provides.

This is in line with the RES which states that “*the region's environment is an important asset and protecting and investing in it makes economic sense*”. A high quality environment enhances quality of life, helps tackle deprivation and attracts people, businesses and investment. Improving environmental performance through measures such as energy and resource efficiency, sustainable transport and waste minimisation, saves businesses money while helping to reduce carbon emissions and reduce the whole life costs of buildings and premises.

The OP recognises *Environmental Sustainability* as one of the three pillars of Sustainable Development. The inclusion of an *Environmental Sustainability* CCT means that, whilst achieving their social and economic goals, individual projects should also aim to minimise negative environmental impacts and, where possible, enhance environmental benefits.

This should be done with particular reference to the OP strategic environmental objectives, as identified in the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the East Midlands ERDF Operational Programme<sup>4</sup>. The OP is set within the framework of, and therefore contributes to, the delivery of environmental objectives within both the RES and Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS).

The *Environmental Sustainability* CCT will, where appropriate, draw on the experience and best practice established during the 2000-2006 East Midlands Objective 2 Programme. Minimising a project's environmental impact and, where possible, enhancing environmental benefits will be achieved both directly by funding specific activities under the main OP priorities and indirectly by raising awareness of, promoting and developing *Environmental Sustainability* approaches in project design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation.

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<sup>4</sup> The S.E.A is available to download from <http://www.goem.gov.uk/goem/euro/struct-funds/ERDF07-13/?a=42496>

## Opportunity for Priority Axis 3 Integration

Priority Axis 3 provides significant opportunities for funding specific (or vertical) activities that promote *Environmental Sustainability*. However, all OP projects will be required to demonstrate alignment with the principles of environmental sustainability as a cross cutting (or horizontal) theme.

Specifically, all projects should promote mitigation and adaptation approaches to climate change and contribute to a more resource efficient regional economy by:

- Minimising the need to travel, and where necessary, taking steps to minimise the environmental impact of travel & transport (including procurement measures which allow locally produced/sustainably sourced goods and services to compete on equivalent terms);
- Wherever practicable, Products/Programmes of Activity should, through the consumables they buy and use, seek to minimise environmental impact(s) and maximise cost savings through the efficient use of resources;
- Undertake to reduce, reuse, recycle or reclaim wastes and surplus materials wherever possible;
- Require subcontractors, and encourage clients and collaborators, to do the same; and
- Consider opportunities for related social and economic benefits (e.g. involvement of local groups/volunteers).

## Project Level Delivery

All projects will need qualitative and/or quantitative indicators, with appropriate targets for each CCT, to demonstrate how the project will contribute to each theme. This will ensure that activity relating to the CCTs is included in the project delivery plan, and will enable projects to measure, report and evaluate this activity.

Monitoring of the CCTs will be included as an integral part of the wider project monitoring process under the Programme, and projects will, as a result, be asked to provide demonstrable evidence to support their achievement.

## 9. Outputs and Results

Given the nature of activity under PA3 there are no set defined outputs and results, although actions are expected to support the facilitation of stakeholders' effective participation in the Programme.

Applicants should work to identify quantifiable SMART outcomes and targets from project proposals that fit with the aims and objectives of this Priority. These may include

the number and type of networks and consortia that will be created/supported; a quantifiable measure of the effectiveness of the network/consortia created or supported (e.g. number of proposals brought forward/approved, number of capacity building initiatives); a quantifiable increase in the level of awareness of, and participation in, the Programme amongst partners and potential beneficiaries; or a quantifiable measure of support for the agreed PA2 delivery arrangements.

## 10. Application and Appraisal Process

### Application & Appraisal Process

Proposals to deliver Technical Assistance 'Programme Facilitation' activity will be invited through open bidding and operated on the basis of a rolling programme with a focus on activity for the first three years of the Programme period.

There will therefore be no deadline for the submission of Expressions of Interest to the Programme Secretariat. Further details on the application process will be provided following Stage One (below).

There are two stages to the application process:

#### Stage One - Expression of Interest (EOI)

Complete the EOI, taking full account of the guidance in this *Prospectus*. You may submit more than one EOI; however, a separate EOI form must be submitted for each proposed project. Check your completed EOI carefully, paying particular attention to the EOI Assessment Scoring Framework that it will be assessed against (which can be found at Annex 3). Make sure your statements are as clear and as full as possible within the word limit. Do not assume that the assessors will be familiar with your organisation or what you do.

A maximum length for answers has been set in order to make the assessment process as fair as possible. You must not exceed the length of the answer prescribed as any additional information will be disregarded by the assessors.

If you have confirmed match funding in place, you should ensure the assessors are made aware of this in your EOI.

The EOI form in *Microsoft Word* is available to download from the East Midlands ERDF website.

**Before completing the EOI application you are advised to read carefully the key documents for the East Midlands ERDF 2007-13 Programme, including the Programme's Technical Assistance Strategy, in order to ensure that your proposal fully meets the eligibility criteria.**

### **EOI submission**

**EOIs should be submitted to the ERDF Governance Manager, European Programme Secretariat, at *emda*. A printed copy (with wet-ink signature), plus one electronic version must be submitted.**

### **EOI assessment**

Your EOI will be assessed against the criteria in Annex 3. Assessments will be made on the basis of what you have written in the EOI. Successful applicants will then be invited to complete a Full Application Form. The Programme Secretariat may provide feedback to applicants on areas they need to further develop for inclusion in the Full Application. Unsuccessful applicants can request feedback from the Programme Secretariat within two weeks of receiving their notification letter.

### **Stage Two - Full Application**

Applicants successful at the EOI stage will be invited to submit a Full Application. The information in the application should be consistent with that in the EOI. Full applications will be assessed by the Programme Secretariat against the qualitative criteria detailed at Chapter 7. The application will also be subject to independent appraisal (also as detailed at Chapter 7). Further guidance on completing the Full Application form will be provided to those applicants invited to proceed to this stage.

### **Publication of Successful Applicants**

The Programme Secretariat will publish a list of the successful applicants and projects on the East Midlands ERDF website. Project information will include organisation name, project name, total project cost, ERDF grant, project description and Priority and Strand.

### **Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000**

Note that all information you provide and subsequent correspondence during appraisal and funding agreement negotiations may be requested by external parties under FOI. Should we receive FOI requests we will seek legal advice as appropriate.

## Contact Details

**ERDF Governance Manager**  
**ERDF Programme Secretariat**  
East Midlands Development Agency  
Apex Court  
City Link  
Nottingham  
NG2 4LA

Tel: 0115 988 8300 or 0115 947 1727  
Fax: 0115 853 3666  
Web: <http://www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk>  
✉: [europeanenquiries@emd.org.uk](mailto:europeanenquiries@emd.org.uk)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What types of activities are eligible for ERDF support?

To be considered for funding applicants must clearly demonstrate that their proposals are in line with the aims and objectives of Priority Axis 3. Chapter 3 sets out in detail what type of activity is eligible for support; applicants must refer to this before completing an EOI.

### How much funding will the East Midlands receive from the ERDF?

The allocation for the region is €268.5m (approximately £220m) for the period 2007-2013, which, when combined with the required match funding, provides a total programme value of €537m (approximately £440m) and represents a significant investment in the economic development of the East Midlands.

The allocation under Priority Axis 3 is €10.7m (approximately £7.4m), representing 4% of the Programme. There is a maximum amount of £3.78m ERDF available for Technical Assistance 'Programme Facilitation' type activity.

### How much ERDF can contribute to my projects costs?

ERDF will only support a proportion of a project's costs. The principle is that the amount of ERDF awarded will always be the minimum necessary to enable a project to proceed. The maximum amount of ERDF available will be a percentage of a project's total costs. This percentage is known as the 'intervention rate'. Projects can opt to use a lower intervention rate or, if justified, request a higher rate. However, the intervention rate for Priority Axis 3 will not normally exceed 50%.

### Are there specific rules for calculating the project's budget?

Annex 1 provides information on the types of costs which are eligible and how some of these costs should be calculated. Should your application reach the application stage, you will need to ensure that all costs meet EC guidelines. Failure to do this will result in no funding offer being made.

### When can my project start, and for how long can it run?

Project activity can commence from the date stated in the funding agreement. Any expenditure incurred prior to this date will be deemed ineligible. Retrospective start dates are not generally permitted and any exceptions will be determined by the Programme Secretariat on a case by case basis.

Projects can normally continue up to 31 December 2010. Note that should your application enter funding agreement negotiations with the the Programme Secretariat, the project start date may slip depending on the duration and complexity of the negotiations.

### **Does ERDF have to be used to add value to an activity?**

Yes. A fundamental principle of ERDF is that projects should add value to new or existing activity, and that the funded activity would not have occurred without ERDF support. ERDF cannot be used to replace existing or planned domestic expenditure. If applications do not demonstrate “additionality”, they will not be successful.

### **Can I apply to continue a project already funded from elsewhere?**

No. Technical Assistance under the 2007-13 ERDF Programme cannot be used to fund continuation of TA projects from previous Programmes due to changing nature of ERDF for the new Programme.

### **Why do you check an applicant’s track record?**

We want to fund the best projects. When assessing an organisation’s application for ERDF, assessors will consider the organisation’s track record in delivering similar activity. If an organisation has previously received ERDF funding, the Programme Secretariat may consult the Government Office for the East Midlands European Team on the project’s managerial and delivery performance. Likewise, the Programme Secretariat may consider the track record of organisations which have delivered *emda* funded projects.

The Programme Secretariat will request an applicant’s audited accounts; projects which are unable to provide audited accounts for the past two financial years will be required to provide a guarantor for the total eligible ERDF grant.

### **How long must I retain project documentation?**

All successful projects in receipt of ERDF must comply with EC regulations about preserving documents and maintaining an audit trail.

Documents relating to projects supported under the 2007-2013 programme should be retained for a period of three years following the final payment by the EC to the Department for Communities and Local Government. This means that a project’s documents may need to be stored and remain accessible until 2020.

### **Will projects be required to publicise ERDF fund support?**

Yes. A condition of the award of ERDF is that projects acknowledge receipt of ERDF funding in all promotional literature, advertising and other documents. Projects in receipt of funding for capital works will also be required to promote ERDF. Failure to do this can result in the repayment of ERDF funds. Further information on publicity requirements will be provided to successful applicants.

### **Are there any requirements to work in partnership?**

Delivery partnerships are not compulsory. However, applicants should strongly consider working in partnership to ensure that their project team includes the appropriate expertise to deliver all parts of the activity; that there are beneficiary progression routes, and that the project has strong links into the community, for example, by working with minority-led partner organisations with grass roots links.

The Programme Secretariat will issue a funding agreement to the successful lead organisation which submits the ERDF application. Applicants will need to develop a legally-binding agreement, such as a partnership agreement, with partners to ensure they subscribe to the successful delivery of the project, are aware of their roles, and are aware of the finances associated with their element of the delivery; this is not considered as sub-contracting (see below).

All delivery partners should ideally be confirmed at Expression of Interest (EOI) stage. Note that the lead applicant is responsible for ensuring all delivery partners comply with the ERDF delivery and monitoring rules. This can be an onerous task, so applicants are advised to limit their partners to only those that will add real value to the project.

### **Can I sub-contract delivery of the project?**

Sub-contracting delivery must add value to a project's activity. The Programme Secretariat will normally only accept one level of sub-contracting (e.g. the lead organisation can sub-contract to a contractual partner). It is the lead organisation's responsibility to ensure appropriate legal agreements are in place.

If the lead applicant is a public body, then it is bound by the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (which incorporates the Official Journal of the European Union (known as OJEU) requirements).

## **Annex 1 – ERDF Eligibility Conditions**

The following eligibility conditions apply to all English ERDF Convergence and Regional Competitiveness and Employment Operational Programmes. Applications to the East Midlands Programme will also be subject to the Core Selection Criteria and Project Assessment Criteria and processes described at Chapters 6 & 7.

### **State Aid implications**

Where a project or scheme contains State Aid within the meaning of Article 87 of the EC Treaty, then appropriate legal cover is required. The European Commission has developed a number of Guidelines and Frameworks that enable them to consider the compatibility of funding schemes within certain areas of activity, for example risk capital and Research Development and Innovation. There are also a number of areas where the Commission has judged aid to be compatible, without the need for approval, if a number of criteria are met. Legal cover here is provided by instruments such as the Training, and the Employment Aid Block Exemptions<sup>5</sup>.

Further information regarding State Aid is available on the European Commission's website: [http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/state\\_aid/overview/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.cfm)

### **Overheads**

Overheads are eligible expenditure provided they are based on real costs which relate to the implementation of an ERDF project and are allocated pro rata to the operation according to a duly justified fair and equitable.

### **Financial Charges and Guarantee Costs**

Under Article 49 of the Implementing Regulation, the following charges and costs are eligible for ERDF:-

- Charges for transnational financial transactions (most likely to arise under Transnational Co-operation programmes);
- Bank charges for opening and administering a bank account, where the implementation of an operation requires a separate account to be opened;

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<sup>5</sup> Further information can be found on the DG Competition website at [http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/state\\_aid/overview/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.cfm) and information and advice can be sought from the BERR State Aid Branch – <http://www.berr.gov.uk/bbf/state-aid/index.html>.

- Legal consultancy fees, notional fees, costs of technical and financial experts, and accountancy and audit costs, if they are directly linked to the ERDF operation and are necessary for its preparation or implementation or, in the case of accounting and audit costs, if they relate to requirements imposed by the Managing Authority; the cost of guarantees provided by a bank or other financial institution to the extent to which the guarantees are required by National or community legislation; and
- The cost of guarantees provided by a bank or other financial institution to the extent to which the guarantees are required by National or Community legislation.

### **Value Added Tax**

VAT that derives directly from the project and which is not recoverable may be eligible but precise rules are complex and if there is any doubt advice should be sought from HMRC.

### **Salary related costs**

Redundancy payments are eligible for ERDF, where the employees' employment contract includes them. Indeed, the Community Law 2002 abolished the use of fixed term contracts without redundancy.

Similarly, if they are written into an employment contract, sick leave and/or maternity payments are an eligible cost. The costs of employing a temporary replacement for an employee away on maternity leave are also eligible for ERDF. However, this may result in an overall increase in staff costs for the project the applicant would need approval to amend the budget.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

Environmental sustainability is a cross cutting theme for all the English ERDF programmes and can be the key theme for an eligible ERDF project, as long as it also contributes towards the economic development of the area in which it is located. Examples of the types of project which might be supported include:

- working with research centres and further and higher education organisations to design and develop of products responding to environmental and energy related opportunities;
- incorporation of exemplar environmental specification into low/zero carbon new and/or refurbished business workspace;
- installation of electricity and heat generating systems and distribution networks to supply low carbon heat and electricity to businesses and employment sites;

- installation of on-site renewable energy systems and distribution networks to supply renewable energy to businesses and employment sites to improve their environmental performance;
- physical environmental improvements in and adjacent to employment sites, to create green and open space that provides environmental, social and economic benefits to the business and wider community by contributing to the creation of accessible sustainable business settings and locations;
- establishment of new capital loan and investment funds targeting sustainable urban regeneration activity to ensure that it incorporates good practice environmental specifications as well as energy, water and waste infrastructure.

### **INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES**

Eligibility of projects will need to be considered on the basis of individual applications. However, projects which should not be assisted include those that fall within the following sectors:

(i) Those covered by EC sectoral restrictions: These include the production of synthetic fibres, textiles and clothing, motor vehicles, shipbuilding, coal and steel, agriculture and Annex 1 food processing. As these restrictions apply to aid to the manufacturing sector, they are unlikely to apply directly to ERDF projects.

(ii) Banks and insurance companies. These should not be directly offered grant, as it would be anti competitive, although they would be acceptable as supporting members of a consortium or as co-financers of a Venture Capital Fund or other loan fund;

(iii) Establishments providing generalised (school age) education. However, specialised activities involving technical education or vocational training, even at university level, may be eligible;

(iv) Provision of local social welfare facilities eg hospitals, nursing homes, fire stations, day nurseries, child-minding facilities, sports facilities, parks, public libraries when these are not directly linked to activities of an economic nature specifically related to the objectives of the Operational Programme;

Note also that the following activities are not normally eligible:

(v) Retail facilities. The general principle is that support for retail facilities will not assist economic development and that improved performance for one facility will displace similar activity elsewhere. There may be rare exceptions, for instance under Sustainable Communities Priorities, where the provision or improvement of a

retail outlet is an important integral part of a general economic development strategy. Where a cultural or tourism benefit can be demonstrated, retail facilities as part of a craft workshop might be supported;

(vi) Coastal protection, soil conservation and infrastructures; all with an exclusively agricultural bias, reforestation and prevention of forest fires, insofar as such infrastructures can be financed under EAFRD.

(vii) That proportion of public expenditure incurred in land acquisition not directly linked to productive investment or investment in infrastructure.

(viii) Building and renovation of housing, although, as part of a wider strategy to regenerate the area, improvement of external estates and prominent buildings in key locations can be supported where this is closely linked to OP objectives.

(ix) Major infrastructure in ports, on the grounds that port developments and port operations should not need public subsidy. Furthermore, it could distort competition between ports. Subsidy tends to spread the problems caused by excess capacity and can be damaging to otherwise healthy neighbouring ports.

Under Technical Assistance, activities to support project implementation and management are not eligible and should be built into individual project plans.

## **INELIGIBLE COSTS**

In addition to the activities listed above, the following individual costs are not eligible for ERDF support:

- notional costs, for example, where an item usually retails at £x, but the applicant buys it cheaper but claims the difference between the price paid and £x.
- payments for activity of a political nature
- depreciation or impairment of assets purchased with ERDF
- provisions
- contingencies and contingent liabilities
- dividends
- interest or service charges arising on finance leases, hire purchase and credit arrangements
- costs resulting from the deferral of payments to creditors
- costs involved in winding up a company
- payments for unfair dismissal
- compensation for loss of office

- bad debts arising from loans to employees, proprietors, partners directors, guarantors or shareholders
- payments for gifts and donations
- entertainments
- statutory fines and penalties
- criminal fines and damages
- legal expenses in respect of litigation
- costs incurred by individuals in setting up and contributing towards private pension schemes, or the setting up of such schemes by organisations in receipt of ERDF
- costs incurred by organisations in relocating personnel displaced by the refurbishment or conversion of a building for ERDF use

Under Technical Assistance, costs to support project implementation and management are not eligible and should be built into individual project budgets.

### ***INELIGIBLE MATCH FUNDING***

Contributions in kind are ineligible for ERDF, except in cases where a clear valuation can be made, such as the donation of a building or land. Discounted sales of equipment, the provision of volunteers' time, the discounted provision of services or advice (eg solicitors', accountants' or SME staff time) **are ineligible.**

## Annex 2 – Expression of Interest form

east midlands  
competitiveness programme  
european regional development fund



|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| PD Reference Number    |  |
| emda Project Owner     |  |
| Date EOI Received      |  |
| Date EOI Scored        |  |
| CCT Gateway (Yes / No) |  |
| Assessor Score 1       |  |
| Assessor Score 2       |  |
| Moderated Score        |  |

### Expression of Interest (EOI) Form Priority Axis 3 – Technical Assistance ‘Programme Facilitation’ – December 2008

An Expression of Interest (EOI) Form should be completed for each project proposal. If you have more than one project idea you should complete a separate form for each idea.

**You should ensure you have read the *East Midlands 2007-13 ERDF Competitiveness Operational Programme* and *Priority Axis 3 – ‘Programme Facilitation’ - Prospectus* before you complete this form. Both documents are available for download at: [www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk](http://www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk)**

Please note that if your application proceeds to Full Application stage, the information provided at that stage should be consistent with that provided in your EOI (accepting that further project development will have taken place). Please ensure that your proposed activities, performance indicators, costs and other information are as realistic and as accurate as possible before submitting your EOI. Please complete the form using **size 12 Arial font**. Supplementary documentation will not be considered at this stage and should not be submitted. Please assume that assessors have no prior knowledge of your organisation or project.

Applicants are being invited that propose to deliver ‘Programme Facilitation’ activity up until the end of 2010.

One original hard copy (with wet-ink signature) plus an electronic version must be submitted to:

**ERDF Governance Manager**  
**ERDF Programme Secretariat**  
East Midlands Development Agency  
Apex Court  
City Link  
Nottingham  
NG2 4LA

Tel: 0115 947 1727 or 0115 988 8300  
Fax: 0115 853 3666  
Web: <http://www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk>  
✉: [europeanenquiries@emd.org.uk](mailto:europeanenquiries@emd.org.uk)

**To be completed by Programme Secretariat**

|                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Date &amp; Time EOI received:</b> |
|--------------------------------------|

## Assessment

It is important that you read and understand the EOI Assessment Framework as your answers will determine your eligibility and score, and whether you will be invited to make a full application. It can be found in the ERDF *Prospectus* which can be downloaded from [www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk](http://www.eastmidlandserdf.org.uk).

**The following scoring scale will be used to score this EOI:**

The maximum points and maximum space available for each question are indicated in the question box. Responses for each question will score 0, 1, 2 or 3:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| 0 points | very little information provided and/or information is inconsistent with the requirements of the <i>Prospectus</i>   |
| 1 point  | some description given, but is unclear or inappropriate in parts, and/or information is inconsistent in parts with the requirements of the <i>Prospectus</i> |
| 2 points | satisfactory and mainly appropriate description provided and/or information is mainly consistent with the requirements of the <i>Prospectus</i>              |
| 3 points | full description and appropriate answer which is relevant to, and meets or exceeds, the requirements of the <i>Prospectus</i>                                |

Please note that the scores are weighted for some of the sections (which reflects the relative emphasis we are placing on the information you provide). EOIs will be expected to achieve a

score of **at least 39** in order to progress. The assessment process will be moderated to ensure consistency.

The Programme Secretariat reserves the right to rule EOIs ineligible if they are not fully completed.

If you are successful at the EOI stage, you will be invited to submit a full application. For more detailed information on the application process, please refer to Chapter 10 of the *Prospectus*.

Note: we may provide feedback on areas which need further development for inclusion in your full application.

## General Information

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Name of lead organisation   |  |
| 2. Address for correspondence  |  |
| 3. Name of contact person*   |  |
| 4. Position in organisation of contact person  |  |
| 5. Direct telephone number   |  |
| 6. E-mail address  |  |
| 7. What is the status of the lead organisation?<br><br><i>Select from:<br/>Partnership, Limited Liability Partnership, Limited Liability Company, Registered Charity, Community Interest Company, Industrial and Provident Society, Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Other (please specify)</i> |  |
| 8. What is the Company Registration Number / Registered Charity Number of the lead organisation (if applicable)?   |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 9. Date when your organisation was registered (if applicable)  |  |
| 10. Does your organisation have audited accounts for the past two years?<br><br><i>If you answer 'No', please provide a reason. If applicable, you must give the name of a guarantor organisation (which has audited accounts) for your project.</i> |  |
| 11. Does your organisation have an equal opportunities policy which is reviewed on a regular basis?  |  |
| 12. Does your organisation have an independent environmental accreditation or an active environmental policy which is monitored regularly?   |  |

\*The contact person must be someone who can answer questions about the project and information provided on this form.

## About Your Project

Please refer to Chapter 3 of the *Prospectus* before completing this section.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. What is the title of your project (please use 5 words or fewer)?               |  |
| 2. When is your proposed project start date?                                      |  |
| 3. What is the proposed project end date (for delivery and financial completion)? |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| 4. Where is the project delivery location (i.e. which boroughs, districts or wards)? |  |
|--|--|

## 1. What will your Project Deliver and How?

**Max. score 36 points**

*Note that the score for this section is weighted; the score you receive will be doubled to give the maximum stated above.*

Please provide the following information:

- A clear description of the project's activities;
- A clear description of the project's outcomes;
- An explanation of how the project activities, targets and outcomes will deliver added value, e.g. why the project would otherwise not have taken place or why it would have taken place in a different, less effective way;
- An explanation of how the project's activity will not duplicate existing activity;
- Detail on the need for this project; and
- An explanation for why your organisation and/or partnership is best placed to deliver the project.

**No more than 300 words**

Please provide a short summary of your project. *The Programme Secretariat may use this summary for management information and publicity purposes.*

*This section is not scored.*

**No more than 100 words**

## **2. Priority Axis and Key Priority Area(s)**

**Max. score 12 points**

Please explain how your project activities, targets and outcomes are consistent with one or more of the Technical Assistance 'Programme Facilitation' key priority areas (Chapter 3 of the Prospectus) under which you are applying.

*Note that the score for this section is weighted; the score you receive will be doubled to give the maximum stated above.*

**No more than 300 words**

## **3. Strategic 'Fit'**

**Max. score 3 points**

How does your proposed project link with the relevant regional and local strategies?

**No more than 150 words**

## 4. Track Record

'Track record' refers to evidence that demonstrates an organisation's experience of successfully working in a particular field. Answer **Section A** if your organisation has a track record relevant to the Priority Axis and Strands under which you are applying. Answer **Section B** if you do not have a track record relevant to the Priority Axis and Strands under which you are applying.

*Note that the score for this section is weighted; the score you receive will be doubled to give the maximum stated below.*

**Max. score 6**

### Section A

Please indicate the type of projects your organisation has delivered over the last 3 years, the amount of funding received, the organisation that funded it and the performance targets achieved.

Only include examples that are relevant to the Priority Axis and Strands under which you are applying.

**No more than 200 words**

**Max. score 6**

## **Section B**

If you do not have a track record relevant to the Priority Axis and Strands under which you are applying, please provide a clear description of the research, scoping and/or piloting that you have undertaken to confirm that you can successfully deliver your described project.

Note that if your organisation does not have a 'track record' then it does not imply your application will be unsuccessful.

**No more than 200 words**

## **5. Partnership Delivery Capability**

Note that partnerships are not compulsory. Assessors will be looking to see how partners will add value to the activity of the project. Answer only section A or Section B of this section.

If you are using strategic or delivery partners, complete **Section C**.

If you will not be using strategic or delivery partners, complete **Section D**.

*Note that the score for this section is weighted; the score you receive will be doubled to give the maximum stated below.*

**Max. score 12**

## **Section C**

The lead partner is the organisation submitting the application and responsible for entering into contractual arrangements with the Programme Secretariat. All strategic and delivery partners are expected to be confirmed at EOI stage.

Note that as lead applicant you will be responsible for ensuring your delivery partners comply with the ERDF delivery and monitoring rules. This is an onerous task, so you are advised to limit your partners to only those that will add real value to the project.

| <b>Name of strategic or delivery partner organisation</b> | <b>Main role (strategic or delivery) and responsibilities of the partner in the project</b> | <b>Partner confirmed in writing (i.e. do you have a letter of support)? Yes or No?</b> |
|---|---|--|
|   |   |  |
|   |   |  |
| <i>Add additional rows if necessary</i>                   |   |  |

**Max. score 12**

## **Section D**

If there will be no delivery or strategic partners involved in delivering the project, please provide a description of your organisation's capacity to deliver the full activity of the project?

**No more than 200 words**

## 6. Outcomes

| <b>Max. score 6</b>  |                        |                        |                        |              |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| <p>Please input the outcomes and measurements against which your project will deliver, and the associated targets. The purpose of this section is to ensure that the outcomes and measurements reflect the aims of your project and will contribute to the delivery of the Technical Assistance Strategy.</p> <p>You must be realistic when forecasting the targets. Do not over-estimate. If an offer letter contract is awarded, the project will be contracted to deliver the number and range of indicators agreed. If you fail to achieve the targets, ultimately you may be asked to repay ERDF grant.</p> |                        |                        |                        |              |
| <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>Year 1<br/>2008</b> | <b>Year 2<br/>2009</b> | <b>Year 3<br/>2010</b> | <b>Total</b> |
| <i>EXAMPLE<br/>No. of networks<br/>created/supported</i>   |                        |                        |                        |              |
| <i>EXAMPLE<br/>No. of capacity building<br/>initiatives</i>  |                        |                        |                        |              |
| <i>EXAMPLE<br/>Increase in the level of<br/>awareness of, and<br/>participation in, the<br/>Programme</i>  |                        |                        |                        |              |
|  |                        |                        |                        |              |
|  |                        |                        |                        |              |
| Add additional rows as<br>necessary  |                        |                        |                        |              |
| <b>Please explain how the outputs have been calculated</b>   |                        |                        |                        |              |
|  |                        |                        |                        |              |

**Please Note:** The ERDF programme operates on calendar years (i.e. January to December)

Should your application reach the Full Application stage you will be required to break the indicators down by equalities groups (women, disabled people, and Black and Minority Ethnic).

## 7. Project Costs & Funding Pack

Max. score 3 points

The ERDF Programme has European Commission-set annual expenditure targets; this profile you provide will allow us to assess when the ERDF grant will be spent (you are strongly recommended to calculate your budget in detail before submitting this EOI).

| Cost heading                            | Year 1<br>(2008) £ | Year 2<br>(2009) £ | Year 3<br>(2010) £ | Total<br>£ |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|
|   |                    |                    |                    |            |
|   |                    |                    |                    |            |
| <i>Add additional rows if necessary</i> |                    |                    |                    |            |
| <b>Total</b>                            |                    |                    |                    |            |

If you consider any of the costs to be particularly high, please explain how the project delivers value for money. For example, your project may be working with target groups that require particularly intensive support which justifies the high cost.

**No more than 150 words.**

## ERDF Grant requested

Of the figures input above, an amount of the costs will be made up of ERDF grant. Please state the amount of ERDF grant you are requesting:

What is the intervention rate for the project (this would not normally exceed 50%)?

| Total ERDF requested ( £ ) | Intervention rate ( % ) |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
|                            |                         |

## Match Funding

Please list below the sources of match funding for the project.

All match funding must be 'clean' i.e. European funding from other sources cannot be used to match fund your project.

Note that written evidence of match funding must be provided from your match funder(s) if you are invited to submit a full application.

| Cash Match Funding                      |                           |            |   |
|---|---------------------------|------------|---|
| Organisation                            | Public or private sector? | Amount (£) | Confirmed in writing and is 'clean' funding? Yes / No |
|   |                           |            |   |
|   |                           |            |   |
| <i>Add additional rows if necessary</i> |                           |            |   |

## 8. Cross-Cutting Themes

8a. How has *Environmental Sustainability* been embedded in the development and/or design of this proposal and how it is to be monitored and evaluated?

This section is not scored, but if inadequately answered could result in ineligibility.

**No more than 200 words**

8b. Please explain what policies and procedures you have in place to address *Equalities* issues with particular regard to minority and under-represented groups.

This section is not scored, but if inadequately answered could result in ineligibility.

**No more than 200 words**

## Declaration

I (insert name) am an authorised representative of (insert organisation name).

To the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this form is correct. I confirm that any ERDF grant awarded will be used for the purposes described.

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Signed</b>   |  |
| <b>Position</b> |  |
| <b>Date</b>     |  |

## Annex 3 – Expression of Interest assessment framework

east midlands  
competitiveness programme  
european regional development fund



### Expression of Interest (EOI) Assessment Framework Priority Axis 3 – Technical Assistance ‘Programme Facilitation’ – December 2008

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Applicant Organisation Name  |  |
| Project Name   |  |
| Priority Axis & Key Priority Area(s)   |  |
| ERDF requested (£)   |  |
| Does this project fit in with Lisbon Agenda? Yes / No*   |  |
| If ‘Yes’ – Please provide the relevant Lisbon Agenda Categorisation of Funds Priority Strand Code: |  |

**\*TA ‘Programme Facilitation’ projects *should* always fit under Lisbon code 85.**

Two individuals must assess this EOI. The jointly agreed scores will be entered on this sheet; both scorers must sign below. By signing this sheet, the scorer is confirming that she/he does not have a personal conflict of interest with the applicant organisation's proposal.

|                                  |   | Score available | Score Awarded | Weighting | Final score |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------------|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1.                               | What is the Project delivering and how?       | 18              |               | X 2       |             |
| 2.                               | Fit with Priority Axis and Key Priority Areas | 6               |               | X 2       |             |
| 3.                               | Strategic 'Fit'                               | 3               |               |           |             |
| 4.                               | Existing Track Record                         | 3               |               | X 2       |             |
| 5.                               | Partnership Delivery Capability               | 6               |               | X 2       |             |
| 6.                               | Outcomes                                      | 6               |               |           |             |
| 7.                               | Project Costs & Funding Package               | 3               |               |           |             |
|                                  | <b>TOTAL</b>                                  | <b>45</b>       |               |           | <b>178</b>  |
| 8. Compliance with CCTs          |   |                 |               |           |             |
| 8a. Environmental Sustainability |   | Yes / No        |               |           |             |
| 8b. Equalities                   |   | Yes / No        |               |           |             |

|   | Yes (tick) | No (tick) |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Is this application recommended to go forward? Yes / No |            |           |

The following sections are scored using the scale below:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| 0 points | very little information provided and/or information is inconsistent with the requirements of the <i>Prospectus</i> |
|----------|--|

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| 1 point  | some description given, which may be unclear or inappropriate in parts, and/or information is inconsistent in parts with the requirements of the <i>Prospectus</i> |
| 2 points | satisfactory and mainly appropriate description provided and/or information is mainly consistent with the requirements of the <i>Prospectus</i>                    |
| 3 points | full description and appropriate answer which is fully relevant to, or meets or exceeds the requirements of the <i>Prospectus</i>                                  |

## 1. What is the Project Delivering and How?

| Criteria  | Score awarded | Comments |
|---|---------------|----------|
| A clear description of the project's activities<br>– <b>3 points</b>  |               |          |
| A clear description of the project's outcomes – <b>3 points</b>   |               |          |
| An explanation of how the project activities and outcomes will deliver added value, e.g. why the project would otherwise not have taken place or why it would have taken place in a different, less effective way – <b>3 points</b> |               |          |
| To what extent is there evidence that the project will not duplicate existing activity? – <b>3 points</b>   |               |          |
| To what extent does the applicant appropriately explain how the need for this project? – <b>3 points</b>  |               |          |
| An explanation for why the organisation and/or partnership is best placed to deliver the project<br>- <b>3 points</b>   |               |          |
| <b>Total score</b>  |               |          |

## 2. Priority Axis and Key Priority Area(s)

| Criteria   | Score awarded | Comments |
|--|---------------|----------|
| To what extent is the project activity aligned to the activity of the <u>Priority</u> under which it is applying?- <b>3 points</b> |               |          |
| To what extent is the project activity aligned to the key priority area(s) under which it is applying? - <b>3 points</b>           |               |          |
| <b>Total score</b>   |               |          |

## 3. Strategic 'Fit'

| Criteria   | Score awarded | Comments |
|--|---------------|----------|
| To what extent does the proposed project link with the relevant regional and local strategies? - <b>3 points</b> |               |          |
| <b>Total score</b>   |               |          |

## 4. Track Record

Score either Section A if the applicant has a track record relevant to the Priority, Strand(s) and Indicative Action(s) under which it is applying **or** Section B if the application is from an organisation which has no relevant track record for the Priority, Strand(s) and Indicative Action(s) under which it is applying.

### Section A (track record exists)

| Criteria  | Score awarded | Comments |
|---|---------------|----------|
| To what extent does the organisation have experience of managing a similar project? – <b>3 points</b> |               |          |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|

**Section B (no relevant track record)**

| Criteria  | Score awarded | Comments |
|---|---------------|----------|
| To what extent is there a clear description of the research, scoping and/or piloting that the project has undertaken to confirm that it can successfully deliver the described project? – <b>3 points</b> |               |          |

**5. Partnership Delivery Capability**

| Criteria  | Score awarded | Comments |
|---|---------------|----------|
| <p>Answer either C or D:</p> <p>C. To what extent will <u>strategic</u> partners enhance the delivery of the project?</p> <p>or</p> <p>D. To what extent is it evident that the project has the ability to deliver without <u>strategic</u> partners? - <b>3 points</b></p>           |               |          |
| <p>Answer either A or B:</p> <p>A. To what extent is it evident that the <u>delivery</u> partners will add value to the project?</p> <p>or</p> <p>B. To what extent is it evident that the project has the ability to <u>deliver</u> without delivery partners? – <b>3 points</b></p> |               |          |
| <b>Total score</b>  |               |          |

## 6. Outcomes

| Criteria  | Score awarded | Comments |
|---|---------------|----------|
| To what extent will the project be delivering outcomes consistent with the Technical Assistance Strategy? – <b>3 points</b> |               |          |
| To what extent will the outcomes offer value for money? – <b>3 points</b>   |               |          |
| <b>Total score</b>  |               |          |

## 7. Project Costs and Funding Package

| Criteria  | Score awarded | Comments |
|---|---------------|----------|
| Are the profiled costs appropriate to the delivery of the project (is the 'intervention rate' appropriate?, is written evidence provided by the match funder and is the match funding "Clean")? – <b>3 points</b> |               |          |
| <b>Total score</b>  |               |          |

## 8. Cross-Cutting Themes

### 8a. Environmental Sustainability

| Criteria  | Comments |
|---|----------|
| Does the project commit to integrate environmental sustainability across all activities at every stage of the project from its development, application and delivery, to how it is monitored and evaluated? |          |

## 8b. Equalities

| Criteria   | Comments |
|--|----------|
| Please explain what policies and procedures you have in place to address the address equalities issues with particular regard to minority and under-represented groups. Is there an Equal Opportunities Policy in place? Has an Equalities Impact Assessment been carried out? |          |

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>FOR <i>emda</i> USE ONLY</b> | <b>The scores awarded from each section should be entered on the front page of the EOI.</b> |
|---------------------------------|---|

## Scores Awarded

| <b>Section</b> | <b>Assessor 1<br/>Score</b> | <b>Assessor 2<br/>Score</b> | <b>Moderated<br/>score</b> |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>1.</b>      |                             |                             |                            |
| <b>2.</b>      |                             |                             |                            |
| <b>3.</b>      |                             |                             |                            |
| <b>4.</b>      |                             |                             |                            |
| <b>5.</b>      |                             |                             |                            |
| <b>6.</b>      |                             |                             |                            |
| <b>7.</b>      |                             |                             |                            |
| <b>Total</b>   |                             |                             |                            |
| <b>8a.</b>     | <b>Yes / No</b>             | <b>Yes / No</b>             | <b>Yes / No</b>            |
| <b>8b.</b>     | <b>Yes / No</b>             | <b>Yes / No</b>             | <b>Yes / No</b>            |
|                | <b>Name</b>                 | <b>Name</b>                 |                            |
|                | <b>Signature</b>            | <b>Signature</b>            |                            |
|                | <b>Date</b>                 | <b>Date</b>                 |                            |

