**Frequently Asked Questions**

Please read the FAQs before applying.

Further information on the South East Asia Prosperity Fund can be found on our [blog](http://blogs.fco.gov.uk/south-east-asia-prosperity-fund/).

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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**What does the bidding process look like?**

The Programme employs a two-stage evaluation process, with decisions made by a Programme Board.

**Interim Project Proposals** – The first stage will evaluate the proposed intervention and the project plan for impact and relevance. We will also look at your stakeholder engagement plan, including any evidence of stakeholder buy-in you are able to show at this stage. We will look at cost and risk broadly. For this first stage of Interim Project Proposals, please only fill in Sections A, B, C, D, E, F, I, K & L on the bidding form.

Results will be announced in early February 2015.  If your proposal is selected, we will invite you to submit a full project proposal. We will provide feedback and work with you to refine your project.

**Full Project Proposals** - The second stage will evaluate your proposal fully against our full criteria of Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Sustainability & Impact.

Results will be made known in early April 2015. If your proposal is selected for funding, you will be invited to sign a contract with the FCO.

**Who can apply for funding?**

We will consider bids from government and other official bodies, NGOs and businesses. However, bids have to demonstrate an ability to bring about a high impact, transformational outcome. Our experience is that this is best achieved by working with government and/or business leaders – but we are happy to consider alternative arrangements.

**Is there a limit to the amount of funds I can bid for?**

There is no set limit for the amount of funding that can be applied for, however bids will undergo a competitive evaluation process, with value for money a part of the evaluation criteria. Bids that request a large amount of funds would represent a significant opportunity cost (and risk) to the Programme. Historically, bids ranging from £20,000 (small bilateral projects) to £100,000 (large regional projects) have been approved.

**Can my organisation bid for more than one project?**

Yes.  We are happy to consider multiple project bids.

**Can I apply for multi-year funding?**

Yes, although we can only guarantee funding for our Financial Year 2015-2016 (1 April 15 – 31 March 16). Funding for activities in the subsequent years will be subject to review and confirmed in the first quarter of 2016. Designing multi-year projects that have concrete deliverables by the end of the financial year would be a good way to prepare for this review.

**What makes a successful policy project?**

We think that working with governments and official bodies is more likely to result in **high impact, transformational** outcomes which are **sustainable** and outlive the duration of the project. But partners can include business and NGOs where their influence can bring around similar result.

**Stakeholder and government support** is vital to any policy project. A proposal that is able to evidence interest from its beneficiaries and stakeholders would be looked upon favourably. In addition, proposals that are able to demonstrate how it can **complement** other on-going/planned work in the region would score better.

We think that effective **communication** is critical to any project’s success, but are mindful to ensure value for money with these activities. Proposals that include any publicity, dissemination and outreach activities in the budget should be accompanied with justification why these activities are needed.

The FCO places strong emphasis on programme and project level evaluation. **Realistic and measurable** outputs, outcomes and milestones would demonstrate that the project design has gone through a thorough and well-considered process.  In addition to a final project report, the FCO would require a narrative and financial report every quarter.

Programme funds are considered Official Development Assistance (ODA) funds from the UK tax payer. We are charged to ensure that these funds are spent in a way that demonstrates **value for money**. A detailed activity based budget is important and the FCO will not entertain administrative costs above 10% of the grant amount requested. Proposals that demonstrate co-funding (monetary or in kind) would be viewed favourably.

Where a regional project bids has been submitted, we will consider the logic behind the involvement of participating countries recognising, where possible, any synergy that might arise from this arrangement.

**Do I have to sign a grant contract?**

Yes.  As a UK government department, the FCO is accountable to Parliament for how it spends it funds. This means that there are certain procedures incumbent on the FCO to ensure that we do so in a transparent manner in accordance with Government Accounting Principles. The FCO uses a standard contract with all successful project implementers as the basis on which project funds are advanced.

For government, not for profit organisation, NGOs and civil society, this will take the form of a standard grant contract. For businesses, this might be in the form of a commercial contract.

The clauses in the commercial contract and grant contract are by default, not negotiable and exceptions are seldom approved. Please ensure that you have read and are happy with their terms before applying for funds.

A [sample contract can be found here](https://whitehall-admin.production.alphagov.co.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/377659/SAMPLE_Grant_Contract_Short_Form.pdf).