

European Social Fund Programme for England 2014-2020

ESF Scoring Framework

This Framework should be applied for Funding Call applications received from 25th August 2016 onwards.

2014-2020 European Social Fund Scoring Framework – minimum requirements and score rationale

Outline Application

Minimum scores

The majority of the questions in the Outline Application will be scored as follows::

- A score of 5 for any ‘yes’ or ‘fully’ answers;
- A score of 3 for ‘partial’ or ‘partially’ answers; and
- A score of 0 for a ‘no’ or ‘not at all’ answers. Any answer scoring 0 means that the application will not go forward to full application stage.

However, for questions **4.2, 4.7, 4.8, 5.1.3** and **5.2.3**, the following will apply:

- A score of 0 for any ‘yes’ answers;
- A score of 5 for any ‘no’ answers.

These are marked with “*” in the relevant parts of this document.

To ensure all applications are of an acceptable standard they must achieve a minimum score of 114 out of 140 (84%). This is based on scoring 5 for questions with “yes” or “no” options and a minimum of 3 for questions with “fully”, “partially” or “not at all” options.

The gateway questions in the Outline Application are not scored but if any fail to meet requirements this would mean the application would not go forward to full application.

In addition, the MA reserves the right to invite projects to Full Application stage where they complement other activity or provide niche activity to target groups within the Operational Programme and have met the minimum score required, even if they have scored less than other applications. The use of this discretion will be the exception and would be decided during the Outline Assessment process. All attempts will be made to confirm invoking this right would not result in any duplication of provision or activity at the local level. The outcome of this decision would be affected by other applications received and the call content.

Some examples of this are below, the list is not exhaustive:

- A project that works exclusively with single parents, where this compliments other provision such as help understanding finances, assistance with travel planning, and training in basic skills, as this would help in reaching a specific target group and help in the transition to more mainstream support.
- A project for injured military veterans to help them rebuild their confidence and skills and support them back into work and the community.
- A project supporting offenders on release from prison, including short sentence prisoners, to help secure employment.

Score where criteria is not applicable

Where a criterion is shown as not applicable in the call (for example procurement or state aid) then a score of 5 should be awarded.

Question 5.4 Revenue Generation

This question is not applicable to ESF and therefore will not be scored against.

2014-2020 European Social Fund Scoring Framework for Outline Applications

1. Strategic Fit			Score
1.1 Does the proposed operation contribute to the needs/opportunities identified in the call to which it is responding?	Fully <input type="checkbox"/>	0 - 5	
	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		
1.2 Does the proposed operation represent an appropriate means of delivering the relevant specific objectives, outputs and results of the relevant priority axes set out in the Operational Programme?	Fully <input type="checkbox"/>	0 - 5	
	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		
1.3 Does the application link activities, costs, outputs/results and delivery of the priorities in the Operational Programme?	Fully <input type="checkbox"/>	0 - 5	
	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		
1.4 If appropriate does the application demonstrate that the project would meet any requirements set in the OP for this type of activity?	Fully <input type="checkbox"/>	0 - 5	
	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		
1.5 Does the proposed operation align to the local growth needs set out in the local ESIF Strategies?	Fully <input type="checkbox"/>	0 - 5	
	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		
1.6 Does the proposed operation duplicate or conflict with existing national policy?	Fully <input type="checkbox"/>	0 - 5	
	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		
2. Deliverability			
Is the operation deliverable within the requirements of the Operational Programme?	Fully <input type="checkbox"/>	0 - 5	
	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		
Is Match Funding in Place	Fully <input type="checkbox"/>	0 - 5	
	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		
3. Value for money			
3.1 Additionality. Does the application confirm that ESIF investment adds value in terms of activities and impacts?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	0 or 5
4. Management and Control			
4.1 Has the applicant confirmed that			
• They have read and understood the document: Management and Control Requirements for ESIF Projects	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	0 or 5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant organisation already has systems in place to comply with these requirements; or has the capacity to establish systems that will meet these requirements 		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	0 or 5
4.2 Does the applicant's track record give any suggestion that the applicant does not have or would not have the necessary management capacity, systems and processes to meet the requirements of the Fund?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	*0 or 5
4.3 Does the application demonstrate a compliant approach to apportioning costs between LEP areas?	NA <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	0 or 5
4.4 Does the application demonstrate a compliant approach to apportioning costs between COR?	NA <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	0 or 5
4.5 Does the application demonstrate a compliant approach to apportioning costs between Investment Priorities?	NA <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	0 or 5
4.7 Does the project intend to incur any expenditure before a funding agreement is agreed		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	*0 or 5
4.8 Due Diligence: Is due diligence necessary?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	*0 or 5
5. Compliance				
5.1 Procurement.				
5.1.1 Does the project involve any procurement		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	0 or 5
5.1.2 Does the application set out an approach to procurement that is compliant with the Procurement Law ESIF Compliance Guidance Note?		Fully <input type="checkbox"/> Partially <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		0 - 5
5.1.3 Does the applicant's track record give any suggestion that the applicant does not have or would not have the necessary management capacity, systems and processes to meet ESIF procurement requirements?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	*0 or- 5
5.2 State Aid.				
5.2.1 Is the applicant and any delivery partners eligible to receive the grant requested within the State Aid Regulations?		Fully <input type="checkbox"/> Partially <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		0 - 5
5.2.2 Would the project provide State Aid to any third parties?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	0 or 5
If yes. Has State Aid been considered? If so is it lawful and is the applicant		Fully <input type="checkbox"/>		0 - 5

and any third parties eligible to receive grant aid at the level requested within the State Aid Regulations?	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		
5.2.3 Does the application or the applicant's track record give any suggestion that the applicant does not have or would not have the necessary management capacity, systems and processes to meet State Aid requirements?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	*0 or 5
5.3 Publicity			
Has the applicant confirmed that			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They have read and understood the Branding and Publicity Requirements 	Yes	No	0 or 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant organisation already has systems in place to comply with these requirements; or has the capacity to establish systems that will meet these requirements 	Yes	No	0 or 5
6. Cross Cutting Themes			
6.1 Does the application demonstrate that the applicant will take positive measures to support the sustainable development theme?	Fully <input type="checkbox"/>		0 - 5
	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		
6.2 Does the application demonstrate that the applicant will take positive measures to contribute towards the gender equality and non-discrimination cross cutting theme?	Fully		0 - 5
	Partially <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Not at all <input type="checkbox"/>		

Full Application

Minimum scores

Applications must achieve a minimum score of 3 for each criteria by the end of the Full Application process to be successful. All criteria are deemed to be critical and a minimum overall score of 57 (42.8% of the total available) needs to be met. Failure to achieve this by the end of the full application process will result in the application being rejected. Where an application is successful and a Funding Agreement is issued, this will be conditional where the final score for any criteria remains at 3.

Score rationale

Where a call indicates that scoring will be used, the framework in this document will apply; all applications will be scored in line with the ESF scoring criteria. The methodology for scoring is described below with the key indicators. At Full Application stage, a maximum score of 133 is possible using the scale below.

Score where criteria is not applicable

Where a criterion is shown as not applicable in the call (e.g. procurement or state aid) then a score of '5' will be awarded. This is required to ensure no applicant is either advantaged or disadvantaged where a criteria does not apply. Awarding '5' indicates that the requirement is met, thereby not disadvantaging the applicant.

2014-2020 European Social Fund Full Application Scoring Scale

7 Meets the requirement with additional assurance

The evidence provided is comprehensive, demonstrating that they completely meet the requirement. They have supplied clear and detailed information. Additional assurance is also provided that the service offered significantly exceeds the minimum service requirement.

5 Meets the requirement

The evidence provided is comprehensive, demonstrating that they completely meet the requirement. They have supplied clear and detailed information.

3 Mostly meets the requirement with minor weaknesses in certain areas

The evidence provided demonstrates reasonable ability, mostly meeting the requirement with minor weaknesses in certain areas. The evidence is fairly clear and convincing with only minor reservations.

1 Mostly fails the requirement with major weaknesses in certain areas

The evidence provided is unclear and, unconvincing and mostly fails to meet the requirement. Some risk to the delivery of service is identified or insufficient information is provided to give assurance that the minimum requirement will be met.

0 Fails to meet the requirement

The evidence provided fails to satisfy the stated requirement

2014-2020 European Social Fund Scoring Framework for Full Applications

Selection criteria	Score
1. Strategic Fit (score out of 28) <i>(section 4 of the ESIF Full Appraisal Form)</i>	
1.1 The proposed operation contributes to the needs/opportunities identified in the Call for Proposals to which it is responding.	0 – 7
1.2 The proposed operation represents an appropriate means of delivering the relevant specific objectives, outputs and results of the relevant priority axes set out in the Operational Programme and fits the guiding principles for selection within each Priority Axis.	0 – 7
1.3 The proposed operation is aligned to the local growth needs set out in the local ESIF Strategies.	0 – 7
1.4 The proposed operation must add value to and not duplicate existing national provision and must not conflict with national policy.	0 – 7
2. Deliverability (score out of 14) <i>(section 5 of the ESIF Full Appraisal Form)</i>	
2.1 Is the operation deliverable within the requirements of the OP?	0 -7
2.2 Is this an effective delivery model? Have the risks been identified and managed?	0 - 7
3. Value for Money (score out of 28) <i>(section 6 of the ESIF Full Appraisal Form)</i>	
3.1 Has the applicant produced a very detailed granular budget breakdown with all eligible, appropriate and justified costs?	0 – 7
3.2 Comment on the status of the match funding from the project (deliverability core selection criteria)	0 – 7
3.3 Does the project represent reasonable value for money in terms of the amount of funding it is requesting when compared with the outputs and results it will achieve?	0 - 7
3.4 Does the application demonstrate a clear case that the investment will deliver activities and impacts that would not otherwise take place?	0 - 7
4. Management and Control (score out of 28) <i>(section 7 of the ESIF Full Appraisal Form)</i>	
4.1 The appropriateness of the resources involved in the project in terms of capacity and capability (e.g expertise, skills, responsibility, experience, structures and processes to deliver a compliant project)	0 – 7
4.2 The applicant's description of how well they describe how they will ensure that delivery partner(s) will comply with the requirements of ESI funding and how they will monitor and manage the performance of delivery partners and / or sub-contractors	0 – 7

4.3 The applicant's financial management and control procedures (e.g. are they already in place? How will claims be compiled and authorised? Are they aware of the cash flow requirements? Is the VAT response satisfactory?)	0 – 7
4.4 The applicant's description of their document management system, understanding the importance of audit trails and accessibility of documents	0 - 7
5. Compliance (score out of 21) <i>(section 8 of the ESIF Full Appraisal Form)</i>	
5.1 State Aid. Any state aid would be lawful and the applicant is eligible to receive grant aid at the requested level within the State Aid regulations, if applicable. Any aid granted through the project to third parties is permissible under and would be managed in accordance with State Aid regulations.	0 – 7
5.2 Procurement. Any procurement already undertaken as part of the operation is compliant with the European Structural and Investment Funds procurement requirements. Any frameworks that they intend to use must be identified and compliant.	0 – 7
5.3 Publicity. Publicity activities undertaken as part of the operation are compliant with the European Structural and Investment Funds publicity requirements. Any publicity already undertaken must be compliant if the applicant wishes to claim that as eligible expenditure.	0 – 7
6. Cross Cutting Themes (score out of 14) <i>(section 9 of the ESIF Full Appraisal Form)</i>	
6.1 Sustainable Development. Cross cutting themes – equal opportunities. The project takes account of and contributes to the Cross Cutting theme (horizontal principle) of sustainable development and meets the relevant legal obligations.	0 – 7
6.2 Gender equality and non-discrimination. The project takes account of and contributes to the Cross Cutting theme (horizontal principle) and meets the relevant legal obligations of Gender, Equality and non- discrimination and Sustainable Development.	0 – 7