

East of England ERDF Competitiveness Programme 2007-13

Call for Expressions of Interest - Bidding Round 8

EEDA is pleased to announce the commencement of bidding round 8. Bidding round 8 is the eighth of twelve planned bidding rounds timetabled until the end of 2010. Details are contained in the Programme Prospectus available on the EEDA website via www.eeda.org.uk/erdf. Arrangements for further bidding rounds will be announced later in 2010.

Expression of Interest

In accordance with the procedure set out in the Programme Prospectus, expressions of interest should be submitted on an ERDF Project Concept form. Only expressions of interest submitted on this form will be considered. A copy of the form can now be downloaded from the EEDA website.

We strongly recommend that draft project concept forms should be submitted by email to erdf@eeda.org.uk as soon as possible and no later than 2 weeks before the Bidding Round closing date. These will be considered by the ERDF facilitation team and discussed with applicants. Final project concept forms should be submitted in electronic form by e-mail to erdf@eeda.org.uk and also by signed hard-copy to the address given at the end of this document. To be considered under the published timetable for bidding round 8, final project concepts must be received at EEDA by **5.00pm on Monday 26 October 2009**.

All submissions of Project Concept forms should be discussed with one of the ERDF Facilitation team prior to submission. It is therefore beneficial to contact one of the team at the earliest possible opportunity. Facilitator contact details are provided at the end of this document.

Early Submission of Project Concept Forms

Potential applicants are invited to submit project concept forms as early as possible. There is no need to wait until the closing date. Project concept forms may be submitted at any time and will be considered for the next available bidding round in accordance with the published timetable. Early submission of a project concept form will enable EEDA the opportunity to provide initial advice on proposals before formal consideration of the proposal by the Competitiveness Delivery Group.

Completion of Project Concept Form

Before completion of a Project Concept Form potential project applicants should read in detail the Programme strategy and theme set out in the Operational Programme (OP) and guidance set out in the Programme Prospectus, available on EEDA's ERDF website www.eeda.org.uk/erdf . To be successful, proposals will need to clearly demonstrate fit with the programme theme "towards low carbon economic growth", be within the scope of interventions as defined by the programme Priority Axis definitions, have multiple beneficiaries and deliver an appropriate proportion of programme targets.

Written sections all indicate a maximum word limit which should be adhered to. Content beyond the word limit may be deleted before submission to the assessment panel or, in extreme cases, concept forms rejected entirely.

The following notes offer guidance on the completion of the ERDF Project Concept Form:

1. Project Name

Enter a descriptive name you would like to use to refer to the project. These will be recorded on our database so please do not use generic names such as "ERDF Priority 1 Bid". Please also ensure you avoid using generic names when saving the file.

2. Application date and version number

The application date is the date that you formally submit the Project Concept Form to EEDA via erdf@eeda.org.uk

The version number is to enable you to manage your document history. Please ensure that you send us the latest version of your Concept Form, or the version you wish us to consider. Any subsequent changes to the document should carry a new version number. Amended versions can be submitted up to the closing date of the bidding round. However, further amendments will not be considered in the current bidding round unless CDG has specifically invited re-submission of the project concept.

3. Project Applicant

Please provide details of the applicant organisation. The applicant will be the organisation that EEDA will contract with if your project is successful. Please refer to the ERDF Prospectus for further information on eligible applicants. If you are acting on behalf of another organisation or partnership please indicate who would be responsible for delivering the project. If the proposal overlaps with activities being undertaken by other organisations or agencies you should consider a partnership approach.

4. Project details

Please indicate the amount of ERDF being requested for this project, the ERDF intervention rate cannot exceed 40% intervention (please see more information below under funding), and must be flat profiled across all years, e.g. the intervention rate must be consistent throughout the duration of the project. More detailed financial

information is requested later in the form. Please also indicate the Priority Axis that you are bidding under.

Enter a realistic start date in accordance with the published bidding round [timetable](#) dates for issue of offer letters. Applicants also need to take into account the approval timetable of other funders. EEDA cannot issue an ERDF offer letter if a full match funding package is not in place. Furthermore, EEDA cannot make any payment to costs incurred prior to the date stated on the offer letter.

The start date should be within three months of the published date for offer letter issue or the project should be submitted for consideration in a later bidding round. The project end date cannot be later than December 2015. Projects should not normally be of more than three years duration.

5. Project Description (maximum 500 word limit)

Detail the overall purpose of the project, critical success factors and how it fits with the programme strategy as defined by the overall theme of “towards low carbon economic growth” and the relevant Priority Axis description. If your proposal is unable to demonstrate a clear link to the overall programme theme “towards low carbon economic growth” and/or a clear link to a programme Priority Axis, it will not be successful.

To be successful, applicants are advised that proposals must have “low carbon” or a clear “low carbon approach” at the heart of the proposal. Check that the proposed activities are eligible for ERDF support, for example training and support for land based businesses are not eligible for ERDF support. The Programme Prospectus (Section 6) provides guidance on eligibility issues and match funding.

6. Project Objectives (maximum 500 word limit)

Provide details of the specific project objectives and overall impact. This section should identify and show what project ‘success’ would look like. The project must have gone through the applicable parts of tier one of the Excellence Framework (www.inspire-east.org.uk) thus showing and addressing the sustainable communities agenda. The score and results of the tier one stage of the Excellence Framework should be shown here, and it is expected that tier two is carried out if the project is invited to come forward with a full business case.

7. Need and Benefit (maximum 600 word limit)

Outline the key need and demand for the project including an indication of how the project is addressing an identified market failure. If the project proposes similar activity to other existing regional projects or services (whether or not they receive ERDF assistance) a strong justification is required to demonstrate the ‘additionality’ of the proposal and the need for public funding intervention.

Explain who the project beneficiaries will be and, if appropriate, the location of the project. Note that projects must be located in the region to be eligible for support. If the proposal does not cover the whole region then a compelling case with an evidence base will need to be made for delivering the project in only one specific part of the region. If your project is ‘place based’ it will be viewed more favourably if it has

the endorsement of the relevant Local Strategic Partnership and is included in the sub-regional ERDF Plan. You will also need to show how you intend to take steps to ensure there is a regional impact over the longer term.

Projects will need to show multiple ultimate beneficiaries. It is highly unlikely, for example, that a project which benefited only a single company would be supported.

If you have undertaken any research, feasibility, needs assessment or consultation, then this is an opportunity to summarise the findings.

8. Strategic Fit (maximum 300 word limit)

Proposals must clearly demonstrate fit with the overall programme theme “towards low carbon economic growth”. Applicants should also refer to other key regional strategies e.g. the [Regional Economic Strategy \(RES\)](#) and any relevant local or sector-focused strategies.

You should also show how the project will complement or link with existing projects or delivery structures where appropriate. Proposals that simply duplicate existing delivery will not be supported. Projects demonstrating linkages with other delivery structures or projects will stand a better chance of success.

9. Fit with ERDF Programme Priorities

Identify the Priority Axis relevant to the project. Applicants should tick the relevant boxes on the project concept form. The expectation is that projects will normally fit into a single Priority Axis (even though many projects may overlap to other Axes.) Please seek advice if you are unclear as to which Axes your project best fits.

10. Cross cutting themes (maximum 150 word limit per section)

Please demonstrate how the Programme Cross Cutting Themes of Equality of Opportunity and Environmental Sustainability will be addressed by the project. Please refer to the ERDF Prospectus (Section 5) for further guidance on areas for consideration. Completion of the ‘equity’ and ‘environmental’ parts of tier 1 of the Inspire East Excellence Framework is a mandatory requirement to be completed prior to submission of the Project Concept Form (see project objectives above), therefore applicants must consider equality and diversity and environmental sustainability issues at an early stage of their project development.

All projects will be required to complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) if invited to submit a full application. The EQIA information forms part of the project scoring criteria, therefore applicants must consider equality and diversity issues as an integral part to the development and delivery of their projects at the earliest possible stage. Therefore it will be beneficial for the project to consider the content of the EQIA.

It is not sufficient, simply to state that your organisation has an Equal Opportunities Policy. The EQIA template is available on www.eeda.org.uk/erdf under key documents.

11. Solutions for Business (maximum 300 word limit)

If the project is proposing to provide a business support service please demonstrate how the project meets the requirements as set out in the 'Solutions for Business' (SfB, formerly BSSP) agenda as defined by [BIS](#). The project will need to state which product in the SfB portfolio it aligns with, and how it complies with that product descriptor. As the SfB agenda is working to distil the business support packages to only a limited few, you will need to show how you have and will continue to liaise with Business Link (and any other relevant business support provider) to ensure that no duplication of activity is taking place. Applicants should also explain how they will use SfB branding in the marketing activity of the project.

12. Options Analysis (maximum 400 word limit)

Please detail consideration of at least 3 viable alternative options for delivery including a "do nothing" option. Project applicants will need to show why the preferred option is the correct and most appropriate option to receive funding. Options should include at least one viable and reasonable alternative to achieving the desired outcome.

13. Partners

A strongly evidenced collaborative partnership in the delivery of your project will be viewed favourably.

Please list the partners who will be engaged in the project. We may contact listed partners when assessing your Concept, so please ensure that the listed partners have been approached and agreed to be named as partners in the project. Please provide information on the status of discussions with partners.

14. Funding

Please enter anticipated sources of match funding. Note that the maximum intervention rate at programme level for each operational priority is 40%. However, this is not expected to be the norm. Given the likely competitive nature of the programme, projects demonstrating greater leverage of match funding may have an advantage. A strong compelling case for the reasons why a project is requesting the full 40% intervention rate will need to be made. Furthermore, the intervention rate must be flat profiled across all years, e.g. the intervention rate must be consistent throughout the duration of the project.

It will not be necessary at Project Concept stage to provide evidence of confirmed match funding. However, at the stage a full application is considered such evidence is a requirement. At the concept stage information on the sources of funding and status of applications/likely approval date is required. You should not include potential sources of funding if you have not yet made an approach and had some indication of the likely chances of success and timescale involved. We may contact listed funders when assessing your Concept prior to the project being considered by the Competitiveness Delivery Group (CDG).

Please remember to complete all of the 'Total' boxes.

15. Project Costs

Please enter details of expected capital and revenue costs for the project and anticipated financial profile, under the headline categories provided. Potential applicants should note the limited scope of capital activities planned in the programme and the rules relating to project income on capital projects. Note that financial profiles for ERDF projects need to be supplied by calendar year.

Please remember to complete all of the 'Total' boxes.

16. Project Indicators

Please enter the appropriate targets under outputs and results. Please enter output data against only the relevant indicators to the Priority Axis. For example Priority Axis 1 output indicators are numbered O 1.1 to O 1.6, Priority Axis 2 O 2.1 to O 2.6 etc. Data on impacts will be evaluated at programme level but if you have estimates under the relevant indicators please enter them. Applicants are reminded that the outcomes stated must be evidenced and auditable. For more information the Operational Programme gives specific details as to the outcome description, please refer to www.eeda.org.uk/erdf key documents.

Applicants should also take care to avoid double-counting of project indicators. For instance, the same SME can only be counted *once* as an output and *once* as a result, regardless of the support it receives. You should therefore consider carefully the most appropriate placement of Indicators. *Note:* to qualify as an output for ERDF, a business must receive at least 2 days (12 hours), or £1,000 worth of evidenced support.

Please remember to complete all of the 'Total' boxes.

17. Declaration

All project applicants must ensure the authorised representative hand signs and dates the application. A project concept form cannot be accepted without it.

Further Information

Expressions of interest on Project Concept Forms should be sent to EEDA at the following address:

ERDF Team
East of England Development Agency
Victory House
Vision Park
Chivers Way
Histon
CAMBRIDGE
CB24 9ZR

You should also send an electronic version of your Project Concept to erdf@eeda.org.uk

For further general information or advice contact:

<p>ERDF Competitiveness Programme Enquiries</p> <p>ERDF Enquiry Line 01223 484622</p> <p>ERDF General Enquiry E-Mail: erdf@eeda.org.uk</p> <p>ERDF EEDA Website: www.eeda.org.uk/erdf</p>

To contact one of the ERDF Facilitators:

Priority Axis 1

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EEDA ERDF Team

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