
Co-Financing Prospectus 2007-11

East of England Development Agency (EEDA)
European Social Fund (ESF)

Contributing to the aims and objectives of the ESF Regional Framework for the East of England



European Union
European Social Fund
Investing in jobs and skills

E E D A
East of England Development Agency

page Contents

3	Introduction
3	Summary of activity
11	The Application Process
11	Contacts

Introduction

The funding allocation for the European Social Fund (ESF) Programme in the East of England for the period 2007-13 is £155 million. This prospectus summarises the activity that the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) proposes within this new programme and the funding it expects to allocate for the initial period 2007 - 2011. The prospectus also includes the planned process and timeframes for organisations wishing to apply for funding.

EEDA will award contracts for all activity through an open and competitive tendering process. It is important to note that this prospectus is intended for information purposes only. Invitations to tender will be issued separately for each activity according to the timeframes specified. ¹

EEDA and ESF

ESF provides the employment element to the Competitiveness and Employment objective of the European Structural Funds programme. The aims of ESF are to tackle worklessness and low skills within the parameters of the agreed national ESF Operational Programme and the ESF Regional Framework for the East of England (www.eescp.org.uk/doclib/East_of_England_European_Social_Fund_Framework_2007_2013.pdf).

EEDA will deliver a programme of activity over the initial funding period 2007-11 using £6.6 million from the regional ESF allocation. Under the system of co-financing, this allocation needs to be matched with an equal amount of EEDA's own resources.

Co-financing combines ESF funding and mainstream public funds as a single funding stream through Co-financing Organisations (CFOs) such as EEDA. This means that organisations wanting to deliver ESF activity on behalf of EEDA will be applying for a project tender that is 100% funded. EEDA is one of five co-financing organisations that provide matched funding for ESF-related activity in the East of England and it recognises the importance of working closely and effectively with a wide range of partners to achieve the aims of ESF.

The five co-financing organisations for the East of England are:

- East of England Development Agency www.eeda.org.uk
- Learning and Skills Council www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/EastofEngland
- Department for Work and Pensions www.dwp.gov.uk
- Bedfordshire County Council www.bedfordshire.gov.uk
- Luton Borough Council www.luton.gov.uk

Summary of Activity

Priorities

The ESF Regional Framework identifies two priority areas in accordance with the ESF National Operational Programme:

- Priority 1 - Extending employment opportunities
- Priority 2 - Developing a skilled and adaptable workforce

EEDA's planned activities for 2007 - 2011 will contribute to the regional aims and objectives under both these priorities.

Funding allocations

Anticipated funding levels are only indicative at this stage. Invitations to tender will set minimum requirements and invite tenderers to propose how they can deliver set targets in line with the anticipated funding allocation for each activity.

¹. While EEDA strives to provide accurate information, the activity, timeframes and funding allocations included are for information purposes only. Interested parties should go to the EEDA website (www.eeda.org.uk/international) regularly for up-to-date information.

Priority 1 - Extending employment opportunities

Aims:

- To increase employment and reduce unemployment and inactivity
- To tackle barriers to work faced by disadvantaged groups such as:
 - People with disabilities and health conditions
 - Lone parents and other disadvantaged parents
 - Older workers
 - Ethnic minorities
 - People with no, or low, qualifications

EEDA Activity 1 - Women's Enterprise

Background and context

Priority 1 in this round of ESF funding is intended to encourage individuals who are currently economically inactive to become active. Women are a target for encouragement because, compared with men, relatively few create and run new enterprises.

National research, backed up by regional investigations, indicates that some women face significant barriers to becoming economically active. These findings have led to the development of business support for women, which has been shown to have a positive impact on those who participated. EEDA has supported the provision of these services through Business Link East (BLE) and through the Enterprising Women programme.



Activity summary

Building on the success of previous activities, and the best practice they identified, EEDA now wants to create an activity for the least economically active women in the region. The activity will use proven methods to help women overcome some of the most basic barriers to finding jobs or starting new businesses.

The biggest challenges for the successful tenderer will be to make contact with economically inactive women, and then motivate them to consider what is best for them and how to achieve it. The activity will need to be flexible enough to meet the needs of individuals through one-to-one support, group working and co-operation with other mainstream services.

Mainstream providers that support women during the activity will be expected to develop organisational expertise in how best to help individuals realise their potential. They should also develop local capacity to continue the work once the activity is over, building on and emulating effective methods.

Expected outputs

Participants in the programme will be drawn equally from people who are unemployed and those who are economically inactive. Individuals will be tracked beyond the initial programme to record how many move into self employment or other economic activity.

Partnerships

Organisations involved in this activity will quickly need to develop good working relationships with groups that already provide support services. EEDA anticipates that these relationships will enable the activity to add capacity and specialist support to existing provision – but with a clear focus on engaging women who need extra inspiration that is not available within the existing provision.

The activity will seek to bridge the gaps between Jobcentre Plus provision and Business Link East support, without duplicating existing services.

Anticipated funding level - £778,000

Tender round opens - 25th February 2008

Tender round closes - 18th April 2008

Further activity in Priority 1

There will be further activities under Priority 1, which are expected to be launched later in 2008. Interested parties are asked to regularly check the EEDA website www.eeda.org.uk/international for updates. An outline of these activities is given overleaf for information purposes.



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EEDA Activity 2

This activity will provide funding for an organisation to recruit local volunteers to help with opportunities arising from the 2012 Games. They will be encouraged to target people who have the poorest prospects of finding paid work, such as:

- Ex-offenders
- People with low qualifications or skills
- Some BME (black and minority ethnic) groups
- Disabled people
- Women
- Those living in areas of high unemployment

Funding will support both general skills training (e.g. confidence building, health and safety and child protection) and sector-specific training (e.g. for cultural, sporting and recreational work). This will ensure that people can gain valuable skills that are relevant in any area of work, but also specific qualifications in areas of interest to them (e.g. sports coaching).



Expected tender launch - Summer 2008

EEDA Activity 3

The activity will provide targeted training to help people develop their financial skills. Where appropriate, it will fund the development and piloting of new ways to improve financial literacy. It will seek to integrate financial literacy provision within basic skills, vocational training and other employability support.

Target groups will include inactive and unemployed people, lone parents and low-income and young householders, especially in deprived areas.

Expected tender launch - Summer 2008



EEDA Activity 4

The activity will support four towns in the region to develop enterprise applying the principles of an enterprising community developed through the East Midlands Development Agency/New Economics Foundation Local Alchemy programme. Successful tenderers will be expected to identify and work with local people, businesses and groups with the skills and knowledge to help.

At a regional level, this activity will seek to influence how local economic regeneration is delivered in the East of England. It will stress the importance of local coaches and networks to help people turn their ideas into reality, and of local assets to make these ideas sustainable.

Expected tender launch - Summer 2008



‘This activity will provide funding for an organisation to recruit local volunteers to help with opportunities arising from the 2012 Games’

Priority 2 - Developing a skilled and adaptable workforce

Aims:

- To reduce the number of workers without basic skills
- To increase the number of workers qualified to level 2 and, where justified, levels 3 and 4
- To reduce inequalities in the workforce
- To develop managers and workers in small enterprises

EEDA Activity 1 - Improving Capabilities - developing adaptable and capable employees, leaders, managers and innovators

Background and context

The Regional Economic Strategy (RES) sets out the critical need for improvements in productivity to maintain the competitiveness and wealth-producing capabilities of the increasingly open economy in the East of England. To achieve this, leaders, managers and employees must strive to maintain and enhance the productivity and competitive position of their organisations.



Activity summary

The activity will aim to improve productivity in two ways:

1. Indirectly through the labour markets, by supporting people facing redundancy to move efficiently into new jobs in sectors that have labour shortages.
2. Directly, by enabling people in positions to improve the productivity and competitiveness of their organisations to receive support to do so.

About one-third of the activity funds will be allocated to (1), where they can support people employed in organisations of any size. Most of this support is expected to be at skills level 2. About two-thirds of activity funds will be allocated to (2), where most support is expected to go to individuals employed in SMEs with fewer than 50 people. Most of this support is expected to be at skills level 4. The residual funding to (2) will support individuals in SMEs of any size and at level 3.

The activity will provide support only where mainstream funders are not able to do so. The invitation to tender (ITT) will ask applicants to suggest how best to deliver the aims of the activity. However, EEDA expects that people facing redundancy will be given information, advice, skills accreditation and skills development. People who are able to help their organisations become more productive may be eligible for skills development in:

- Leadership
- Management
- The introduction and absorption of innovation into products, production, or delivery
- Specialist technical skills

The vast majority of support provided by the activity is expected to be given to the sectors listed below. However, applicants must develop a flexible delivery structure that enables delivery to other or different sectors if needs or policies change:

- Food and drink processing
- Automotive and high-tech manufacturing
- Built environment
- Creative (including design)
- Low-carbon and sustainable technologies
- Life sciences and healthcare
- Tourism in support of the Olympics
- Transport gateways
- Financial services
- Social enterprise

In addition, the activity is to support particular groups and initiatives:

- Women's enterprise
- Language and cultural support for international business
- The 2012 Olympics

Detail in these areas will be provided in the ITT.

This activity will form part of the Flexible offer within Train to Gain. Previous EEDA-funded projects R2R and Towards 2010 have developed specialist advisor capacity and support networks in the region to help people develop the new skills they want. Successful tenderers for the new activity will be expected to nurture and develop this existing infrastructure, and to create a robust and mutually beneficial arrangement with the newer publicly supported regional services delivered by Train to Gain skills brokers and Business Links.

Tenderers will be asked to set out arrangements for supporting co-operation between advisors and brokers. These should create mutually beneficial incentives that reward co-operation and support robust referral within a framework that improves regional productivity.

Further information about R2R and Towards 2010 can be found at:

- www.exemplas.com/Skills-and-Training/Planning-and-Management-redundancy
- www.eeda.org.uk/192_44.asp

Expected outputs

EEDA expects at least 4,200 people to receive skills development of six hours or more during the activity (around 1,500 at level 2; 600 at level 3; and 2,100 at level 4 and above).

Applicants will be required to set SMART (specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic and time-based) project outputs appropriate to the activities they propose. Outputs should be split by sub-region and reflect the density of the different sectors within the sub-region's economy. Targets might cover:

- Skills development
- Advice and organisation support
- Reduction in time between jobs
- Referrals in and out (e.g. to innovation services, MAS, Train to Gain)
- Private sector contribution to costs (EEDA recognises that subsidy is likely to be high in the redundancy element of the project, but expects the average subsidy to be around 50 per cent of beneficiary costs for the rest of the project)

Applicants will be expected to state how their project's targets and proposed outputs will support the activity's objectives. Activity and outputs should be flexible enough to take into account available funding, market demand, changing economic conditions and changing regional institutional arrangements.



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Partnerships

Consortium applications are expected, because the activity must be delivered across sectors and levels by people with sound sector knowledge and credible track records of high-quality delivery. The activity must be delivered across the East of England.

Anticipated funding level - Approximately £6 million

Tender round opens - 25th February 2008

Tender round closes - 18th April 2008

Further activity in Priority 2

Development work is currently underway and other activities are expected to include a volunteering scheme and a programme to support the integration of migrant workers. The expected tender launch for further activities is Summer 2008 and interested parties are asked to regularly check the EEDA website www.eeda.org.uk/international for updates.

The Application Process

In order to ensure fairness, openness, and transparency, all of EEDA's ESF provision – including match activity – will be offered through an open and competitive tendering process. This process is a competition for providers to tender for a grant to carry out the activity as specified in the tender specification. All invitations to tender will be published on the EEDA website at - www.eeda.org.uk/international

Any organisation in the private, public or voluntary sector, as long as it is a legal entity, can apply for funding. EEDA will encourage partnership working with companies, research organisations and voluntary organisations. All applicants need to be legally constituted organisations or partnerships. In the case of informal partnerships, one legally constituted organisation must be the lead and hold the contract. A sole trader cannot be a lead partner in a tender but can be part of a consortium led by another organisation.

Applicants should look carefully at invitations to tender, which will be launched from February 2008, to determine whether their applications will be eligible for this funding activity and whether the services they propose specifically meet the criteria set out in the activity summaries. To encourage co-operation between activities, and to enable the sharing of best practice, EEDA plans to hold quarterly meetings among all the successful applicants during the project lifecycles.

Successful applicants will receive a letter of offer from EEDA, which will state the criteria against which payments will be made and the frequency of payment. This will be against an agreed profile of activity and outcomes. Reconciliation of profiled activity against actual progress will be made at quarterly intervals. Projects can then submit quarterly claims to EEDA.

EEDA will provide 100 per cent funding for successful projects. However, the following rules apply:

- Only revenue funding to support the management of the project is eligible (small capital items up to £1,000 may be purchased)
- All project activity must be completed by the specified end date
- Activity cannot start before approval from EEDA, as there is no retrospective funding

Contacts

Any queries should be emailed to cofinancingenquiries@eeda.org.uk Further contact names will be listed in the individual tender specifications.

