



**GIBRALTAR EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND (ESF)
INVESTMENT FOR GROWTH AND JOBS GOAL
2014-2020**



SELECTION CRITERIA

SELECTION OF PROJECTS

1. The Managing Authority will assess an application for funding against the Programmes selection criteria.
2. A project will only be funded if it has successfully been appraised by the Appraisal Sub-Group and achieved a minimum threshold of a “good” assessment. The project will be appraised against both the gateway criteria and core selection criteria.
3. Successful projects will then be discussed by the Joint Local Advisory Group (JLAG) who will recommend or reject a project for funding.
4. The core selection criteria can be summarised as:
 - Strategic fit;
 - Value for money;
 - Management and control;
 - Deliverability;
 - Compliance with procurement; State Aid, publicity requirements and eligibility rules;
 - Cross-cutting themes;
 - Gender Equality and non-discrimination; and
 - Sustainable Development.

BACKGROUND

5. The Managing Authority will make decisions in a timely manner in order to avoid any unnecessary hardship to the applicant. The Managing Authority will guide the applicant throughout all stages of the process.
6. The details of the proposed project, as submitted in the application form, will form the basis of the funding agreement between the applicant and the Managing Authority. The applicant therefore needs to ensure that as much detail as possible is included in the application form.

7. JLAG will conduct a full, technical appraisal of all aspects of the applications, drawing in independent expert advice where required, for example professional and technical advisors, other Government Departments or partners as required.

GATEWAY CRITERIA

8. These are the minimum eligibility requirements which must be met in order that any application is considered for European Social Fund support.
 - i. Applicant must be eligible to apply for funding in accordance with the Common Provisions regulations and the National Eligibility Rules for the Fund.
 - ii. The proposed activity and associated expenditure must be eligible for support under Regulation (EU) 1303/2013; and of Regulation (EU) 1304/2013 for European Social Fund and of National European Social Fund Eligibility Rules.
 - iii. The project must present clear evidence that it contributes to the needs/opportunities identified in the Gibraltar ESF Operational Programme and the achievement of the specific objectives, outputs and results of the relevant Investment Priority as set out in the Operational Programme (see below).

CORE SELECTION CRITERIA

9. The Managing authority will use qualitative and quantitative approaches in assessing the selection criteria.

Strategic Fit

- The proposed project contributes to the needs/opportunities identified in the Gibraltar ESF Operational Programme.
- The proposed project represents an appropriate means of delivering the relevant specific objectives, outputs and results of the relevant Thematic Objective as set out in the Operational Programme.
- The proposed project is aligned to the local growth needs.
- The proposed project must add value to and not duplicate existing national provision and must not conflict with national policy.
- The proposed project contributes to the **creation of sustainable employment.**

Value for Money

- Applications must demonstrate a clear case that the investment will deliver relevant activities, outputs and results that would not otherwise take place.
- The project must represent value for money. In assessing value for money, the Managing Authority will take account of:
 - **Efficiency:** the rate/unit costs at which the project converts inputs into outputs.
 - **Economy:** the extent to which the project will ensure that inputs to the project are at the minimum costs commensurate with the required quality.
 - **Effectiveness:** the extent to which the project contributes to Programme output targets, results and/or significant strategic impact at local level.

Management and Control

- The applicant must demonstrate:
 - Appropriate expertise, capacity and capability to deliver the project successfully.
 - The necessary management capacity, systems and processes are in place to meet the requirements of the Funds.
 - Capacity to meet the financial requirements and liabilities that flow from the receipt of European Social Fund support. Any non-public sector organisation will be subject to a full due diligence assessment of the applicant organisation.

Deliverability

- The Managing Authority will consider whether:
 - The project is deliverable within the requirements of the Operational Programme taking into account risks, constraints and dependencies.
 - The project has appropriate arrangements in place to secure the required level of match-funding.

- Evidence has shown that this type of project is effective or where the project is new or innovative, the risks have been considered and appropriate mitigations put in place.

Compliance

- In addition to the above management and control requirements, the applicant must be fully conversant with the compliance requirements for procurement, State Aid, EU rules on publicity and the fund specific Eligibility Rules. Where relevant they must demonstrate that:

Procurement

- Any procurement already undertaken as part of the project is compliant with the European Structural and Investment Funds procurement requirements.
- Any frameworks that they intend to use must be identified and compliant.

State Aid

- That 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.

Publicity

- Publicity activities undertaken as part of the project are compliant with the European Structural and Investment Funds publicity requirements.

National Eligibility Rules

- Proposed activity and related expenditure is compliant with the fund specific National Eligibility Rules.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

10. The project takes account of and contributes to the Cross-Cutting themes (horizontal principles) and meets the legal obligations of each:

- i. Gender Equality and non-discrimination
- ii. Sustainable Development

INVESTMENT PRIORITIES AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

11. The following are Gibraltar's Investment Priorities and Specific Objectives for the European Social Fund.

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 1:

(8i) Access to employment for job-seekers and inactive people, including the long-term unemployed and people far from the labour market, also through local employment initiatives and support for labour mobility.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

Specific Objective 1:

To increase the number of individuals over 25 years of age, not in employment, education or training, accessing the labour market.

The results that are sought to be achieved with Union support are to get more people, over the age of 25 years of age, into employment including self-employment. This group will include long-term unemployed, especially individuals facing additional barriers e.g. those with criminal records or ex-addicts, etc.

Specific Objective 2:

To increase the number of young people (below 25 years of age) accessing the labour market.

The results that are sought to be achieved with Union support are to get more young people under the age of 25 into employment. Available data shows that this age bracket has by far the biggest proportion within the registered unemployed. This will include those under 25's who may have to take account of additional barriers to access the labour market e.g. health issues or addictions. The ultimate goal of the intervention will be getting this target group into employment.

Actions will be carried out which will aid access to the labour market and subsequently assist with activities which will help with deployment and progression. This will be carried out through focussed initiatives which will target, in particular, individuals who require assistance in removing barriers which preclude them from obtaining employment.

Actions to be supported will include:-

- Interventions which help to remove individual barriers to employment, create independence and provide individual mentoring and advocacy advice;
- Schemes dedicated to individuals requiring assistance, e.g. early school-leavers, long-term unemployed, etc.;
- Initiatives to encourage employers to employ individuals requiring particular assistance to enter the labour market e.g. ex-offenders, ex-addicts, etc.

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 2:

(10iv) Improving the labour market relevance of education and training systems, facilitating the transition from education to work, and strengthening vocational education and training systems and their quality, including through mechanisms for skills anticipation, adaptation of curricula and the establishment and development of work-based learning systems, including dual learning systems and apprenticeship schemes.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

Specific Objective 1:

To increase the number of individuals with basic and functional skills.

The results that are sought to be achieved with Union support are to increase the individual's opportunity to obtain basic and functional skills. Focus will be on individuals who have difficulties in accessing or maintaining employment because they have little or no skills. The result will be getting these individuals to obtain a basic or functional skill.

Specific Objective 2:

To increase the number of the employees who complete work-based learning schemes or apprenticeship schemes.

The results that are sought to be achieved with Union support are to ensure that local workers become more competitive in the work environment and decrease the need to "import" skilled workers from outside the territory of Gibraltar.

Actions will be carried out which will provide training or re-skilling of the workforce to ensure that the right level of proficiency is available in the labour market. This will be carried out through focussed initiatives which will address skills mismatch and deliver demand led skills based on labour market information.

Actions to be supported will include:-

- Interventions to provide basic skills (numeracy and literacy); interventions to provide non-job specific vocational skills; interventions allowing for progression to NVQ level 2 or above;
- Initiatives to assist people to upgrade the skills, competencies and experience required to improve their employment status (including self-employment).