



July 2010

€bulletin >>>

> regeneration > sustainability > innovation > commitment



Welcome to the Highlands and Islands Partnership Programme

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... prosperous, inclusive and self-sustaining communities, where the unique cultures, traditions and environments are enhanced ...

Welcome to the July €bulletin.

Round 5

A total of 106 applications were received following the recent call for bids, 63 ERDF and 43 ESF. This was a sterling effort from partners across the board and whilst major efforts will be required to secure match funding, we would anticipate significant progress will be made in increasing commitment levels across both Programmes.

Such was the level of demand, a mini Advisory Group was convened to prioritise bids and effectively make the level of demand more manageable. It would not be appropriate to quote figures at this stage since a number of the Stage 1's will not

proceed for various reasons but, nevertheless, the position is extremely positive.

As expected there was a large request for assistance under the “renewables” heading but, more significantly, additional support from the Scottish Funding Council has enabled the development of a major training initiative under the auspices of the UHI Millennium Institute.

The IAB will be working with sponsors over the next few months to ensure best quality applications come through under Stage 2 towards the end of August.

N+2

As you may be aware, the Commission has been expressing concerns over our capacity to meet our N+2 targets (2010), particularly under ESF. Part of our response, as set out in the ESF Action Plan issued to the Commission from The Scottish Government, is to collect the most accurate and up to date projections of expenditure possible. This process has been underway over the last couple of weeks, with proformas issued to sponsors of all the “live” ESF projects.

Thanks to all those who have responded – almost a full house - the figures presented are extremely promising. I would urge all sponsors to keep the pressure on and help us deliver our targets. This is important, not just for 2010, but also for the longer term benefits to the Highlands and Islands.

Desk Checks

Since the employment of a new member of staff in June, who has been charged with collating the information to facilitate clearing administrative checks on Progress Reports and Claim forms, the IAB is now working Full Steam Ahead.

Many of you will have already received an e-mail containing your transaction list/s, with the items we intend to check highlighted, If you have not yet received this, be prepared, it will be arriving soon! Once received we kindly ask that all the relevant supporting documentation is scanned and emailed to us as quickly as possible.

The target for the expenditure checks is 20%. However, checks (particularly those for

ESF) are coming out well in excess of this. This is largely because we need to check one month of salaries for each member of staff involved on the project, in addition to a percentage of all other cost headings, and this often, significantly, raises the percentages being checked.

To help speed up the process we are trying to visit as many organisations as possible to process groups of checks on site. This helps cut down the time needed to clear any issues encountered in processing the information as any missing or ambiguous items can be resolved immediately.

Before sending in your information it is good practice to check to see if you can follow your own audit trail. If you cannot follow the trail from source to bank statement with the information you've assembled, then it is unlikely that we will be able to. Please try to keep the information to a minimum, this is especially relevant to large organisations.

From the checks that have already been done the recurring problems have been:

- 1) Incomplete Time Sheets.
- 2) Incomplete procedures e.g. no signatures on petty cash vouchers.
- 3) Incorrect descriptions of items.
- 4) Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). This cannot be claimed.

If you are in any doubt as to what will be expected of you during this time, or have any queries relating to Desk Checks in general, please notify your contact at the IAB.

€urosys

€urosys is fundamental to the application and claiming process of European Structural Funds. Therefore it is vital that organisations keep their user information up to date.

All organisations should have at least two gatekeepers at all times.

It is the responsibility of the gatekeepers to deactivate their users/gatekeepers if they leave the organisation and to add new users/gatekeepers.

Anyone having any difficulty with this or any other €urosys query should contact The Scottish Government at Eurosyst@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



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