



May 2009
€bulletin

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



Welcome to the May €bulletin.

This edition covers Round 4 update, fast-tracking procedures and some news on the SRDP and EFF Programmes in Scotland.

It has been another busy month preparing for the forthcoming Programme Monitoring Committee and trying to encourage applications under Round 4 with project surgeries taking place across the region. Good news is that there are some interesting proposals coming forward.

The Programme Monitoring Committee will meet on 3 June 2009 at Lochaber College in Fort William with a full agenda. Items include a strategic overview, N+2, the Annual Implementation Reports, monitoring controls and a report on fast-track projects. Future €bulletins will provide an update on the discussions from the meeting.

Fast-Track Procedures

As mentioned in the March €bulletin, “fast-track” procedures were agreed by the PMC in February – these are set out in a document on the HIPP website (www.hipp.org.uk). Projects require to be both strategic and time critical and deliver a significant impact. Fast-tracking is not an alternative for projects which have failed to meet the normal planned cycle. If you have a project which may qualify and you would like to request fast-tracking please contact Jamie Dunsmore at HIPP as soon as possible.

Round 4 Deadlines

A reminder that the Round 4 Stage 1 deadline is 26 June and Stage 2 deadline is 21 August.

If you are a new applicant, please contact Rosemary Currie at HIPP as soon as possible as you will need to register by 15 June to gain access to the Eurosyst system for Round 4. Please note that the deadlines for Round 3 for the two LUPS Programmes are different and decisions are not taken until Spring 2010. Deadlines for the LUPS programmes are available on: <http://www.esep.co.uk/02-applications-key-dates-round3.html>

JESSICA and JEREMIE

Discussions have been taking place on two European initiatives that the area may be able to take advantage of:

(i) JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas)
Ernst & Young have been commissioned by the Scottish Government to look further at issues surrounding the establishment of a JESSICA Highland fund. A major issue relates to the eligibility criteria but it may be possible to concentrate support on potential projects in non City areas. The scale of projects should be £5M + and there must be a potential to provide a return on investment. Returns would then be available for further investment in the region following current structural funding programmes. Projects focusing on tourism, retail or residential would be ineligible.

Scoping work is continuing and the target is to have the fund operational by the end of 2009. A Steering Group is preparing outline options for the Highlands and Islands.

(ii) JEREMIE (The Joint European Resources for Micro to Medium Enterprises) provides a framework for improving the financial environment for small businesses on the basis that increasing access to finance and risk capital enables economic growth and competitiveness. The stated intention of the Scottish Government to move towards the establishment of a Scottish investment Bank may create new opportunities for the Programme and for the Highlands and Islands. Meanwhile, Highlands and Islands Enterprise is considering potential investments in the Scottish Co-Investment Fund or the establishment of a new venture capital scheme in its region.

In both cases, funding is drawn from the Programme and is not additional. Future newsletters and ~~€ull€ins~~ will provide updates on the two initiatives.

Scottish Rural Development Programme

Rural Priorities Deadlines

The Scottish Government has published details of the forthcoming application rounds for the Rural Priorities:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Rural/SRDP/SRDPNews/May2009/2009DatesRP>

Newsletter

The Scottish Government is keen to ensure updates on the Programme reach everyone who is interested. A 'rural' newsletter is produced by the Scottish Government and a dedicated SRDP news section will now be incorporated into this newsletter which will be emailed monthly. To sign up to Rural News please go to: <http://register.scotland.gov.uk/?rt=12>

European Fisheries Fund

A grant from the **European Fisheries Fund (EFF)** may significantly benefit businesses in the catching, aquaculture, fish processing sectors, or if you are engaged in marketing or promoting fisheries products or for fishing communities.

Under the EFF programme some **£44 million from the European Union** along with about **£34**

million from the Scottish Government is available to Scotland over the period 2007-2013. EFF Grants to assist mainly capital expenditure projects are available to established and fledgling businesses and also fisheries communities. Levels of assistance for successful applicants **will typically be between 40% to 60% of eligible project costs**, and sometimes higher.

The EFF Programme can aid :

- Aquaculture;
- Fishing Vessels;
- Fishing Port Facilities;
- Measures of Common Interest;
- Processing and Marketing; and
- Fisheries Dependent Communities.

The next deadline for the submission of applications is 31 July 2009 and announcement of successful proposals will likely be in October 2009.

Arrangements have already been agreed within the within Highlands and Islands to ensure complementarity between support from the SRDP and mainstream ERDF and ESF. Please contact HIPP for further information.

ERDF and ESF Regulations

Amendments to Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 (ERDF) and No 1081/2006 (ESF) have been approved and these cover an extension of eligible costs under both funds and, under ERDF, will permit energy efficiency and renewable energy investments in housing (restricted to up to 4% of the ERDF programme allocation). These amendments are currently under consideration by the Scottish Government and information on any impact for the Programmes and the National Rules will be circulated in due course.



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