



8th Call for Applications – Application Pack 2012

3. Assessment Procedure and Project Selection

Background to the Programme

The general outline of the programme is presented in the Operational Programme. An abstract can be found in the document “Priorities and Strategy”. This document provides the strategy of the programme and information on the content of the priorities and areas of intervention.

These documents aim to guide project applicants through the North Sea Region Programme 2007-2013. Please also consider the Application Pack’s last section on further reading.

All documents mentioned and presented here can be found on the website of the North Sea Region Programme: www.northsearegion.eu. Please also follow the latest developments in the news section of the website.

Successful Applications

If you wish to receive advice regarding your project application, please contact the Secretariat. Remember that applying for funding is going to be a very competitive process. The programme seeks for high quality projects with large impacts; it is not just about meeting the criteria. In the end it is the Steering Committee deciding by consensus, which projects will achieve most for the programme.

Assessment Procedure

Following the submission of the project application the assessment procedure is initiated, which comprises of a Project Eligibility Check and, given the project is eligible, an assessment against a number of Core Selection Criteria and Priority Considerations.

Eligibility Check

Upon receipt of the projects application in the Secretariat, the Lead Beneficiary will be sent notification of its receipt. All projects will first be assessed on eligibility. If the project fails the eligibility check, the Lead Beneficiary will receive a letter from the Secretariat explaining on what grounds the project application failed. The Steering Committee will be notified of all projects that failed to meet the eligibility check. Only projects that pass the eligibility test will be considered by the Steering Committee. Please bear in mind that the limit of 10 pages on the Additional Information will be part of the eligibility check and the applications failing to comply with the limit will be rejected as ineligible.

Technical Assessment: Core selection criteria and priority considerations

When a project meets the eligibility requirements, it will come to the next stage of assessment and will be tabled at the Steering Committee meeting.

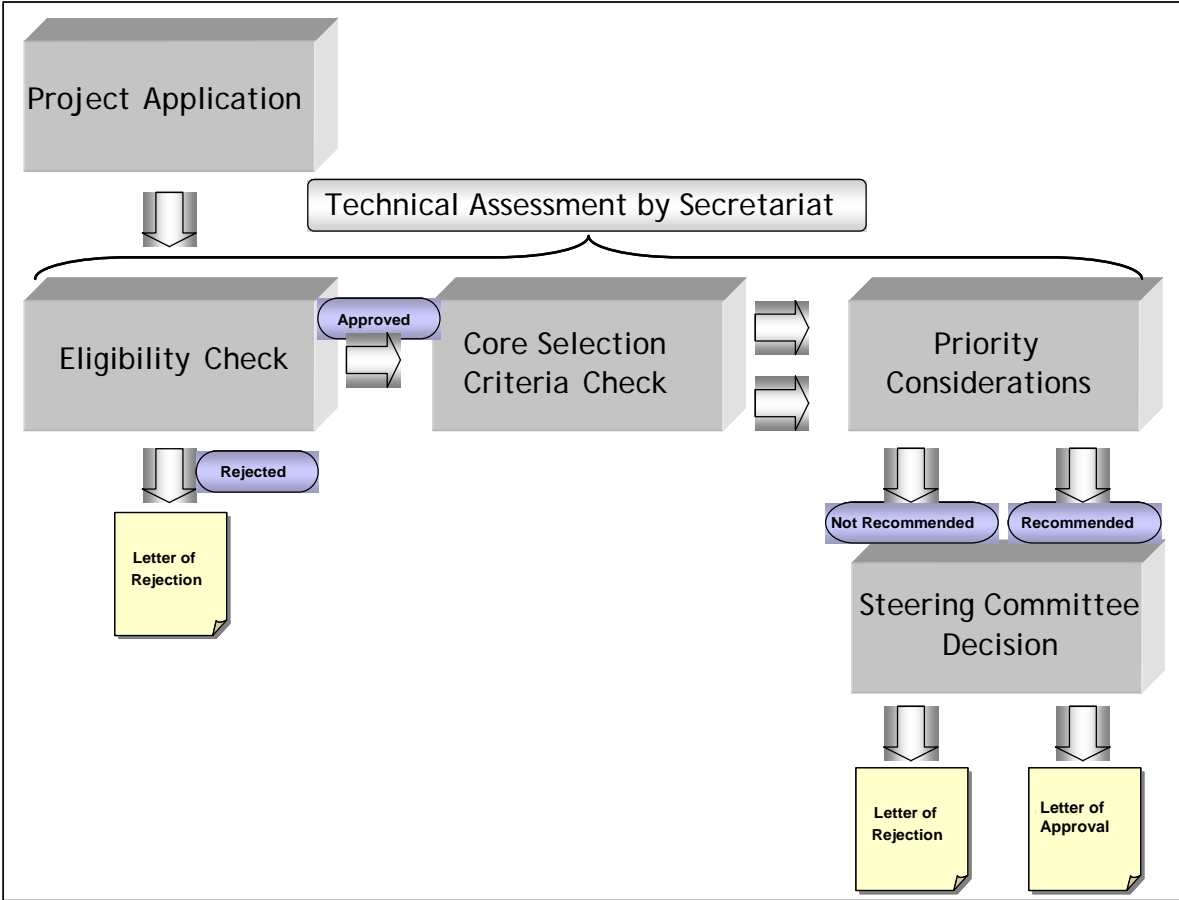
The Secretariat will carry out a technical assessment of the application applying the core criteria and the priority considerations (please find the criteria listed below). Project applications will need to meet these criteria and considerations. This process takes about one month. As a result of this assessment the Secretariat forms a

recommendation to either approve or reject the project, which is passed on to the Steering Committee. In the end it is the Steering Committee that takes the decision about the approval or rejection of the project. The criteria and considerations in the assessment will guide them as to the project's quality and potential to contribute towards the programme targets.

Steering Committee Decision

After the Steering Committee meeting, the lead applicant will be informed of the decision. Once a project application is approved, the Secretariat will draw up the contract on behalf of the national authorities of the Lead Beneficiary organisation. This is a legal document between the project Lead Beneficiary (in the capacity of representing the whole partnership) and the Secretariat, on behalf of the seven programme countries. When the Steering Committee rejects the project, a letter of rejection will be sent to the Lead Beneficiary. The Lead Beneficiary is responsible for communicating to the other partners in the project.

The following picture illustrates the different steps of the project selection process:



Project Selection Criteria

Core selection criteria (c1 – c10)

	Criteria	Description
	Programme	
c1	Contribution to transnational regional development	<p>Projects must demonstrate the importance of their transnational approach to the topic addressed for achieving significant impact in the NSR. The applications must also show how project activities contribute to regional development in the transnational perspective. The perspectives for regional development are described in the synthesis report and its corresponding reports as a complement of the long-term spatial vision NorVision. Another source of reference is the Territorial Agenda of the EU.</p> <p>How to: A way to do this is to demonstrate clearly how the project objectives link to transnational regional development. It will be insufficient to reiterate the content of programme documents.</p>
c2	Contribution to the joint transnational strategy	<p>The joint transnational strategy has been developed building on the analysis of the opportunities and challenges for the North Sea Region. It is formulated in chapter three of the operational programme. Projects should have clear links to the strategy.</p> <p>How to: A way to do this is to demonstrate the link to the programme priorities, e.g. in terms of the concrete project activities. It will be insufficient to reiterate the content of programme documents.</p>
c3	Project matches the specific area of intervention	<p>The operational programme includes 4 priorities. Each of these priorities has specific areas of intervention. They are described in chapter four of the operational programme. Applications must refer at least to one area of intervention. It is also possible to refer to other areas, as they are not necessarily independent from each other.</p> <p>How to: Applicants are asked to carefully examine the priorities and areas of intervention in order to select those which correspond to the aim, objectives and activities of the project.</p>
	Partnership	
c4	Horizontal and/or vertical co-ordination and co-operation	<p>The project has to consider the relevant actors on local, regional and (trans-) national level. On the horizontal level actors from different relevant sectors should be considered, e.g. politicians, administrations, institutions (e.g. research, chambers of commerce), NGOs, companies (SMEs). On the vertical level, the process of decision-making, relevant for the project, has to be considered.</p> <p>How to: The application must show why and how the relevant actors take part in the project and how they are co-ordinated. There must also be a description on how decision-making affects the project and if so in which way it is taken into consideration. Local, regional and (trans-) national levels are to be reflected.</p>
c5	Relevant and viable partnership	<p>A relevant and viable partnership is a pre-condition for the quick and effective implementation of a project. This is necessary because of the risk of loss of funding due to the decommitment rule. A relevant partnership is also necessary to make sure the project links to relevant national policies of the partner-countries involved in the project. The partnership should also ensure that the results of the project guarantee long lasting effects.</p> <p>How to: Applications may demonstrate the relevance and viability of the partnership by describing its transnationality, by the detailed costed workplan and the communication strategy.</p>
	Policies	
c6	Delivery towards Gothenburg strategy and/or Lisbon agenda	<p>Projects deliver at least to the Gothenburg strategy and/or to the Lisbon Agenda. Gothenburg Strategy: Sustainable development is formulated as an objective in the general rules for the ERDF. Projects are asked to make contributions towards the European Commission's strategy for sustainable development, which recognizes that economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection must go hand in hand. Aims of the renewed Lisbon agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making Europe and its regions a more attractive place to invest and to work, • knowledge and innovation for growth, and • more and better jobs. <p>How to: A way to do this is to demonstrate how, for example the activities of the project take economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection into consideration and to demonstrate a clear link between the concrete project results and at least one of the aims.</p>
	Output	

c7	Project will demonstrate added value and deliver tangible and measurable results	<p>Projects have to make a difference. They contribute to build the capacity for innovation, to sustainable management, to improved accessibility or to the sustainability and competitiveness of communities by delivering towards the Gothenburg and Lisbon agendas. Projects also need to demonstrate that the project activities are additional. They should propose activities that would go beyond what will be carried out by the partners anyway.</p> <p>Projects will deliver concrete outputs and tangible implementation activities, which have the potential to make a change. Studies, road-maps, action-plans, etc. are possible but should be <i>part</i> of the activities and <i>not</i> a main result by themselves.</p> <p>How to: Projects have to demonstrate clearly that the activities carried out and the project results will make a change in comparison to the current situation and that they are additional to what is being planned anyway.</p>
c8	Project will demonstrate value for money	<p>The project's budget should be proportionate to the results aimed for. In addition projects will have to demonstrate cost-effectiveness.</p> <p>How to: This will be demonstrated in the detailed costed workplan in the application.</p>
	Indicators	
c9	Information on core indicators complete	<p>The application form contains a set of indicators for measuring the progress and success.</p> <p>How to: Applicants must fill out the indicator information and present a baseline and a target for each of the indicator. Beside the core indicators only those must be chosen which are relevant for the project.</p>
	Legislative Requirements	
c10	Projects will comply with national and EU law and policy	<p>All organisations in the Member States have to comply with EU and national law and policy. The partners in the project are responsible for carrying out the activities in accordance with the applicable legislation. All projects need to be consistent with Community policies and operations regarding equal opportunities. Projects need to consider their impact on equal opportunities. National and European tender rules also needs to be considered.</p> <p>How to: The Lead Beneficiary certifies compliance with national and EU regulations in signing the Application Form and, when the project is approved, the Contract. The representative(s) from the national authority of the country of the Lead Beneficiary will be asked to confirm the compliance of the project with national policy before the Steering Committee can decide on the project.</p>

Priority Considerations (p1 – p9)

	Criteria	Description
	Approach	
p1.	Description of problem to be tackled and the solution	Projects that provide a clear description about the problem the project proposes to tackle and which also provide a comprehensive idea about the contribution the project can make to its solution will be prioritised.
p2.	Concrete implementation of project results towards European policies	Implementation activities, which clearly make a contribution to the aims of ongoing European policies, will be prioritised. These include among others Gothenburg and Lisbon agendas, the Territorial Agenda, Trans European Networks, Energy Efficiency and other ongoing and important European policies in relation to the 4 priorities of the Operational Programme.
p3.	Involvement of public private partnerships and/or SMEs and leverage of extra investment.	Projects involving public private partnerships and/or Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SME) will be prioritised. Generating future private and public investment within a transnational perspective will be an additional asset.
p4.	Promoting innovation	Projects promoting innovation and the transition to a knowledge-based economy in the North Sea Region will be prioritised. The programme aims to develop a positive innovation-orientated culture.
	Transnationality	
p5.	Transnational approach	Project activities, which are clearly transnational, will be prioritised. The implementation activities of the project, should have a measurable transnational impact.
p6.	Transnational partnership	Partnerships including partners from several different member states who will have potential impact on the transnational area and which cover large parts of the geographical area will be prioritised.

	Knowledge transfer	
p7.	Consideration of experiences from former and other ERDF projects	Taking into consideration experiences and outcomes from former and other ERDF activities is an advantage.
p8.	Links to other programmes and projects	Clear and activity based links to other programmes and projects relating to the project-topics will be a priority factor.
p9.	Publication and communication strategy and public ownership	<p>Projects considering the following points for their publication and communication strategy will be prioritised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A clearly structured publication, dissemination and marketing plan, which includes all partners. - Communication on the international, national, regional and local level aiming to transport the transnational added value of the project. - Focusing on all media and additionally using progressive techniques like e.g. web-casting, blogs, etc. - Explaining Interreg and the EU-context. - Considering the needs of the specific target-group(s). - Using the potential of public ownership of the project results within the strategy.

**The Interreg IVB
North Sea Region
Programme**



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