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CROSS CUTTING THEMES

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Original sources from which this guidance has been drawn are:

Full Application Guidance – Opt-In/Co-Financing Organisations (ESF), February 2015 draft

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/legislation/equality-act-2010/what-equality-act>

Big Lottery Fund's Approach to Equalities

Big Lottery Fund's Sustainable Development web resource

ESF good practice guidance

Sustainable Development in ESF 2007-13 Lessons Learned and Issues to Consider for the Next Programme (DWP, August 2014)

ESF equal opportunities and sustainable development tool kit produced by Ecorys for DWP for the 2007-13 programme

There are ESF two cross-cutting themes (sometimes also called “CCTs” or “horizontal themes”) that must be fully integrated into the development and delivery of every project. These are **gender equality and equal opportunities** and **sustainable development**.

The chances are that your organisation already has in place policies and action plans or strategies to show how you are addressing the cross-cutting themes as these are both areas already covered by UK and EC law. You can use your organisational policies to develop policies and plans specific to your BBO project. The policy and action plan will not only help you meet regulatory requirements, but should also be used as a tool to help provide a quality service to participants.

Evidence of how you as the lead organisation, and any partners and subcontractors, have integrated the cross cutting themes will be monitored throughout the delivery of your project, and will also be reviewed as part of a project audit.

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities

As an employment and training programme, it is a key aim of BBO to reduce inequalities in the labour market. The need to treat everyone equally, regardless of race, gender, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marital status or disability, plays an important part in the sustainable development of local economies. Further information about the Big Lottery Fund’s approach to equalities can be found here <https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/about-big/our-approach/equalities>

Your project must have a project-specific **equal opportunities policy** (covering staff and participants) **and action plan**, as well as clear evidence that it is implemented and monitored.

All organisations involved in delivering BBO projects must be committed to promoting equal opportunities and non-discrimination in all areas of their work. This should ensure full compliance with current legislation, most notably the **Equality Act 2010**.

The 2010 Equality Act, and the related Public Sector Equality Duty, brings together previous legislation into a single act which provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. See <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/legislation/equality-act-2010/what-equality-act>

It identifies nine “protected characteristics” that can form the basis of discrimination:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

- marriage or civil partnership status

The three aims of the Act are to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations (tackling prejudice and promoting understanding) between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality (the second aim) involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; and
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy

You are required to have a project-specific gender equality and equal opportunities policy in place, covering staff and participants. This is a formal document that is a public statement of your project's commitment to preventing discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and treating people fairly. The policy should:

- Have a **clear title** linking it to the project
- Have a clear general statement which **recognises the importance of the Equality Act 2010** and the related Public Sector Equality Duty and commits the project to meeting the aims of the Act and advancing equality
- The public commitment should be **endorsed by the chief executive of the lead organisation** (or a similar senior figure within the organisation), reflecting commitment from a high level within the organisation
- Have a **clear revision history** – indicating when the plan was agreed and who approved it, and any changes as the project progresses to reflect changes in legislation and best practice
- The policy should cover the **nine protected characteristics** of the Equality Act. Public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status.
- Explain how the organisation will ensure that any **partners and subcontractors** will operate within the policy and action plan

- Give a commitment to **communicate the policy to staff, participants, partners and subcontractors** as necessary
- Give a commitment to **monitoring of progress towards key objectives**, including **monitoring representation and performance of different groups (sex, race, disability, age)**.

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Action Plan

The action plan should set out how the project will turn its equality commitment into action. The plan should be reviewed on a regular basis and in line with any contractual requirements set by the Big Lottery Fund, so that it is a working document, demonstrating continuous improvement.

The plan should be communicated to staff, partners, participants and where necessary, subcontractors.

You will need to collect equality data to monitor the extent to which your equality targets are being met and put in place remedial action where targets are not met.

The plan should cover:

- **What you understand to be the different needs and challenges of the people who will benefit from the project**
You need to be able to understand the different types of need of your participants and the potential challenges they may face. Which groups face particular disadvantages and what is the nature of this disadvantage?
- **How you will address any difficulties people may have finding out about the project**
You need to make sure that the people who could benefit from the project know about it.
- **The steps you will take to ensure the project is accessible by those hardest to reach**
You need to make sure that your intended participants are able to fully participate in the project.
- **How you will ensure that people's barriers are overcome and needs are met in taking part in the project**
You need to make sure that your participants can fully benefit from the project and that they are treated fairly.
- **How you will ensure that equalities are integrated in how the project is managed and run**
You need to make sure that your project's management policies and practices fully take account of gender equality and equal opportunities.

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Good Practice

As a minimum, you should be able to demonstrate that your project:

- Encourages women and disadvantaged groups to take part in the project and supports them to do so. Examples might include innovative/proactive recruitment, disclosure of disability, use of community partners, provision of childcare and other support that may be required by your target group
- Ensures that the content and delivery of training can be accessed, understood and applied by people of all groups
- Ensures that provision is flexible in terms of time and location
- Promotes access for disabled people, including access to your premises and provides specialist equipment/practices, covering all forms of physical and mental disability
- Tailors support to meet the needs of the individual (as far as possible)
- Delivers equal opportunities training and awareness raising and ensures that equal opportunities issues are addressed in recruitment, appraisal and pay
- Requires partners and sub contractors to follow the project's gender equality and equal opportunities policy and plan
- Monitors its equalities performance with regards to staff and participants
- Is committed to ongoing review and improvements to delivery of equal opportunities activity.

1. ESF Gender Equality Good Practice guidance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/314951/esf-gender-equality-good-practice-guide-2012.pdf

2. Good Practice in Helping Disabled People Back to Work

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/helping-disabled-people-back-to-work-esf-good-practice-guide>

3. There are some useful pointers on supporting participants with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to access ESF in the Skills Funding Agency report:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284936/lld_evidence_report.pdf

4. The ESF Equal programme produced the following equality and diversity good practice guides on ethnic minority communities and age equality:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ethnic-minority-communities-equality-and-diversity-esf-good-practice-guide>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/age-equality-and-diversity-esf-good-practice-guide>

5. The ESF Age Network has a range of resources on good practice provision for older participants. See <http://www.careerandage.eu/prevsite/> including

http://taen.org.uk/uploads/resources/TAEN_SpecialPublication_FinalForWeb.pdf

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is about finding ways of meeting social, economic and environmental needs in an integrated way, for both present and future generations. It recognises the need to balance environmental, social and economic considerations when designing and delivering activities.

All organisations involved in delivering BBO projects must be committed to complying with relevant environmental legislation and promoting sustainable development practices. Your organisation must have a sustainable development **policy** and **action plan** that it puts into practice in delivery of services, and which you monitor and report on.

The UK Sustainable Development Strategy “Securing the Future” was published in March 2005. It sets out **four priorities** for UK action. These are sustainable consumption and production, climate change and energy, natural resource protection and environmental enhancement, and sustainable communities.

In relation to sustainable communities **the three core areas** cover:

- Environment – protect and enhance the environment through things like green spaces, play areas, no litter, decent gardens, quality houses, less noise and pollution and protecting wildlife.

- Economic – promote economic success through things like good educational opportunities, jobs, decent shops, affordable heating and electricity and good transport.
- Social – meeting social needs through things like inclusive and democratic governance, communities that provide opportunities for all and meet the needs of the most disadvantaged people, good leisure and health facilities, and safe neighbourhoods.

Further details are provided in the Big Lottery Fund’s Sustainable Development web resource <https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/funding-guidance/applying-for-funding/sustainable-development>

Sustainable Development Policy

You are required to have a project-specific sustainable development policy in place, covering staff and participants. This is a formal document that is a public statement of your project’s commitment to meeting the requirements of relevant legislation and advancing sustainable development practices. The policy should:

- Have a **clear title** linking it to the project
- Have a clear general statement which **recognises the importance of sustainable development and** commits the project to meeting the requirements of relevant legislation and advancing sustainable development practices
- The public commitment should be **endorsed by the chief executive** (or a similar senior figure within the organisation), reflecting commitment from a high level within the organisation
- Have a **clear revision history** – indicating when the plan was agreed and who approved it, and any changes as the project progresses to reflect changes in legislation and best practice
- The policy should cover the **UK priorities and core areas of sustainable communities**, including promotion of energy conservation and promotion of public/green transport and a commitment to (a) dispose of its waste using a registered waste collector and (b) observe and comply with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) regulations
- Explain how the organisation will ensure that any **partners and subcontractors** will operate within the policy and action plan
- Give a commitment to **communicate to staff, participants, partners and subcontractors** as necessary
- Give a commitment to **monitoring of progress towards key sustainable development objectives and targets.**

Sustainable Development Action Plan

The action plan should set out how the project will turn its sustainable development commitment into action. The plan should be reviewed on a regular basis and in line with any contractual requirements set by the Big Lottery Fund, so that it is a working document, demonstrating continuous improvement.

The plan should be communicated to staff, partners, participants and where necessary, subcontractors.

The plan should cover:

- **The opportunities for sustainable development in the project and how you have identified them**

You need to be aware of the three core areas within the sustainable communities priority of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy “Securing the Future”: protect and enhance the environment, promote economic success and meeting social needs.

- **How you have designed the project to take account of sustainable development**

Having identified opportunities for sustainable development, you should then consider which are most appropriate for your project and how they could be incorporated.

- **How you plan to support and train staff in sustainable development**

You need to make sure that staff are aware of the project’s sustainable development policy and receive appropriate training and support.

- **How you will measure, monitor and review your environmental impact and that of your partners**

Your sustainable development policy should give a commitment to monitoring progress towards key sustainable development objectives and targets to demonstrate ongoing improvements to your sustainable development performance.

- **How you will incorporate sustainable development policies and procedures into your organisation and partnership**

Your sustainable development policies should be fully integrated into how your organisation and partnership operates.

Sustainable Development Good Practice

As a minimum, you should be able to demonstrate that your project:

- Complies with or exceeds UK/EU environmental regulations
- Takes steps to minimise waste and energy consumption
- Promotes waste management, including recycling
- Has staff and participant travel policies that encourage use of public transport/green transport
- Requires partners and sub contractors to follow the project's sustainable development policy and plan
- Measures, monitors and reviews its environmental impact and its "carbon footprint"
- Is committed to ongoing review and improvements to its sustainable development performance.

ESF Good Practice Guidance

Sustainable Development in ESF 2007-13 provides case studies and good practice examples and useful checklists:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/350510/sustainable-development-lessons-learned-report-2007-2013.pdf

Record Keeping

You will need to keep the following records in order to monitor your cross cutting themes policies and action plans and demonstrate that your project complies with ESF requirements:

- GE&EO and SD policy
- GE&EO and SD action plan
- Senior endorsement and reviews of the policy and plan and revision history
- Evidence that staff, participants, partners and subcontractors are aware of the policy and plan and have received appropriate training and support, along with opportunities to provide feedback
- Research into best practice
- Research and methodology to produce project baselines, objectives and targets

- Activity records, documentation and materials
- Monitoring data to demonstrate progress against objectives and targets across the whole project (both those set by the Big Lottery Fund and project owned)
- Remedial plans, issue logs, lessons learnt and risk registers to demonstrate remedial action undertaken
- Case studies, materials and good practice examples