

Enterprise M3 Board

24 May 2016

EU Programme Update – Item 13

Board members are asked to NOTE the progress on the EU programme.

1. ESIF Strategy Refresh

- 1.1. The ESIF Strategy was refreshed and submitted in February to Government including the revised outputs targets for both ESF and ERDF programmes and the updated financial projections. We are awaiting final sign off by DCLG.

2. ESIF Committee

- 2.1. The next Enterprise M3 Area ESIF Committee will meet on 15 June.

3. Update on European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

- 3.1. We have now issued four calls for ERDF.
- 3.2. The ESIF committee gave strategic advice on the full applications received for the **Digital Business Acceleration Hubs and on the Digital Growth Project**. Both of these projects were a result of the first call in March 2015. Both proposals should now move quickly to contract subject to latest queries being answered by the applicants. A further project for a **Funding Project** is likely to take longer because of some issues that the MA is taking up with the lead organisation.
- 3.3. The **Innovate2succeed call for innovation support for business** worth £500k is undergoing full appraisal assessment by the MA and will come to the next meeting of the ESIF committee.
- 3.4. **The UKTI national call for additional support for exporting** (ex-ERDF Opt-in) worth £600k for Enterprise M3 area has now closed and is now proceeding to full application.
- 3.5. The ESIF Committee gave strategic advice on the **Woodfuel supply chain specification** worth £1m and this is now proceeding to full application
- 3.6. Two applications were received to support a **business sector innovation network**. The ESIF committee gave strategic advice on both outline applications.
- 3.7. Recent Calls – An ERDF specification on Low Carbon worth £2m has been issued on 21 April for Enterprise M3 area. We negotiated with the MA to push back the closing deadline to 10th June so as to allow a minimum of 6 weeks to applicants to prepare their partnership bids. A promotional ERDF event for Low Carbon Projects is scheduled on 19 May at Basingstoke Innovation Centre co-funded under ERDF TA.

4. Update on European Social Fund

- 4.1. SFA Opt-in - The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) are continuing to develop the final specifications in conjunction with the LEP to allow procurement to start at the end of April 2016. The 5 calls will cover:

- Employer centred employability & basic skills worth £0.75
- Employer led vocational pathways for the unemployed worth £1m
- Employer led vocational pathways towards higher skills worth £0.75m
- Employer led vocational pathways for redundancy worth £0.5m
- Information advice and guidance worth £0.5m

The expecting starting date of the SFA projects implementation is September 16 with an 18-month delivery period. Enterprise M3 will run an ESF promotional event in May to promote the SFA calls once issued.

- 4.2. Big Lottery Opt-in – The one specification being procured through BLF on social enterprise is progressing and the full application has been recently assessed. The BFL specification re-tendered under social inclusion was launched on 17th March.
A promotional event funded under TA was organised by Enterprise M3 on 23 March and gathered about 30 partner organisations from our area as potential applicants.

5. Update on European Agriculture Fund for Rural development (EAFRD)

- 5.1 The first three EAFRD specifications for Enterprise M3 closed on 8 January 16. 11 applications were received against the 3 following project calls: SME **business development grant** (from £50,000 up to approximately £140,000) for micro and small businesses in rural areas; support investments in new or existing **visitor attractions**. Grant (from £50,000 up to approximately £140,000) and support for micro, small and medium-sized businesses seeking to expand and create jobs in the **food processing sector** (from £50,000 to £250,000). The ESIF committee gave advice on the strategic fit on 29th March and the following 7 projects were invited by DEFRA to proceed to full applications:

- Hambledon Wineries Ltd for a new tourism and visitor centre facilities
- T. Hilling and Co Ltd T/A for Chobham Adventure Farm Park
- G Horn and Sons for an office conversion
- Artisan Farm Limited for Goats Cheese Dairy
- Whitewater Potatoes Limited for Freefolk Distillery
- BrushBaby Ltd for an E-Commerce NPD Project
- Hambledon Wineries Limited for a New Wine Cellar and Capacity Expansion

- 5.2. Future calls: It is anticipated that the next EAFRD call will be open in summer 2016. It is intended to issue similar specifications as in the first call.

6. Technical Assistance (TA)

- 6.1 We have submitted two Technical Assistance bids for Enterprise M3 LEP area for the period until December 2018. These ESF and ERDF TA bids will provide funding for staff and events to promote and help partners apply for EU funds. The ESIF Committee gave strategic advice on both full applications. There are a couple of queries outstanding to clear with the accountable body before our ERDF grant offer is issued
- 6.2. Our new ERDF Project Officer Pam Jones started on 4th April and is already arranging various events to promote and support partners in EU applications.
- 6.3. We are waiting to hear the outcome of our ESF TA.

Kathy Vuillaume
26th April 2016